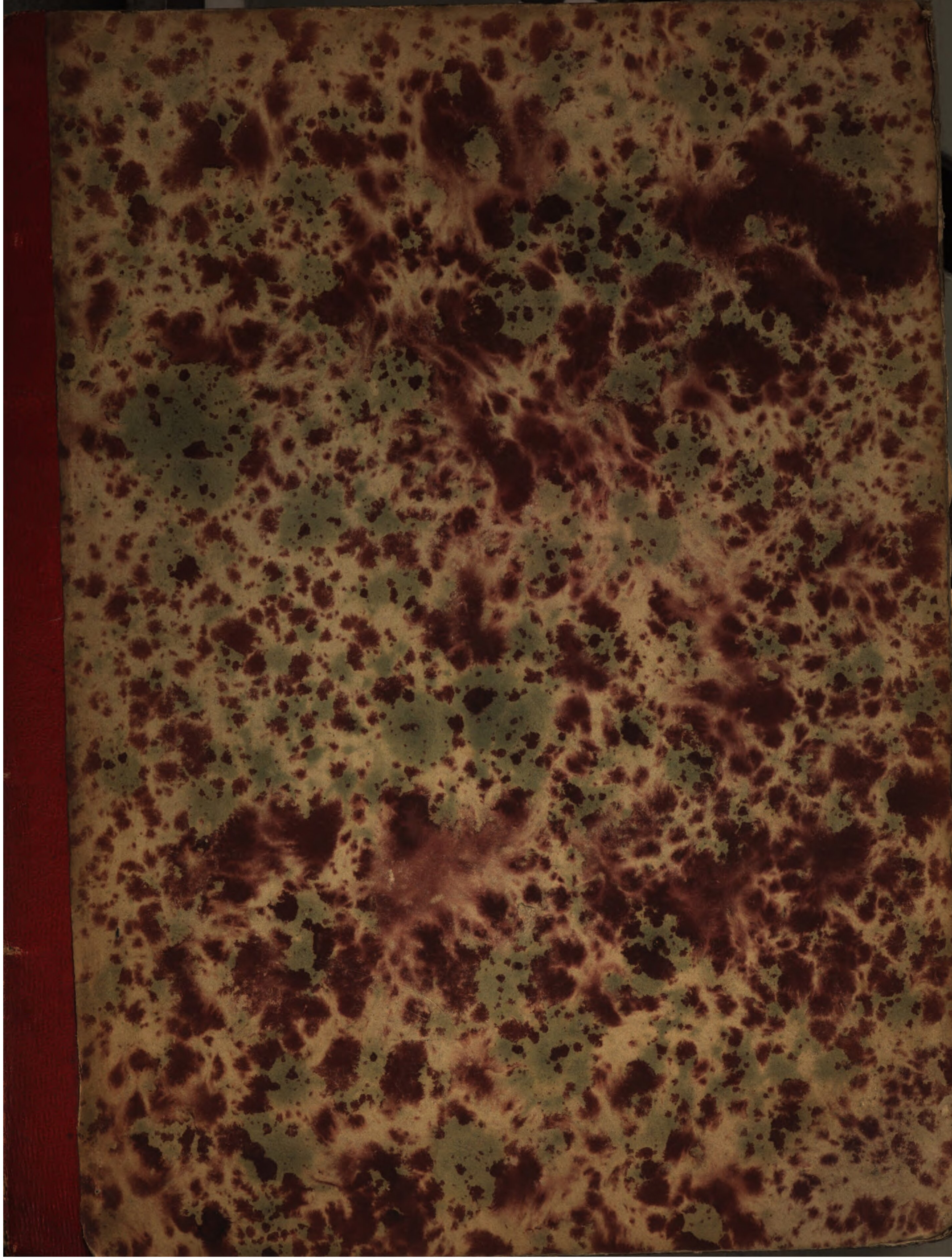




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THE
HISTORY OF BRISTOL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

JOURNAL OF THE

AMERICAN



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Published by W. Sheppard, Exchange, Bristol.

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BRISTOL.
seen from Clifton Wood.

THE
HISTORY OF BRISTOL,
CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL;

INCLUDING

Biographical Notices

OF

EMINENT AND DISTINGUISHED NATIVES.

Urbs antiqua

Dives opum.

Like some renown'd Metropolis
With glittering Spires and Pinnacles adorn'd.

VOLUME I.

By JOHN CORRY,

[Author of "A Satirical View of London," &c. &c.]

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Work was originally projected by Mr. AGG, who proposed to publish it in Parts, and accordingly Part the First appeared in 1808. Six Parts, forming the first volume, were written by Mr. JOHN CORRY, a gentleman previously known to the public as the Author of several popular productions. In consequence, however, of Mr. AGG's bankruptcy, the work became the property of Mr. SHEPPARD, by whom application was made to the Author of this advertisement for its completion, by extending it to twelve parts, or two volumes, of which it was at first proposed the History should consist. The Author's fondness for topography in general, and the attention which he had given to that of his native city in particular, induced him, though with some degree of reluctance, to engage in the task. This was towards the close of the year 1809. From that period to the present, a portion of the leisure afforded by the stillness of the evening-hour, or by the recurrence of vacation-time, has occasionally been given to the History. Its progress was therefore, of necessity, slow, independently of impediments arising from circumstances over which the Author had no controul.

Of the manner in which the task has been executed, every Reader will determine for himself. The Author wishes it had been completed more to his own satisfaction, and regrets that several errors of the press have escaped correction, especially in the early part of his volume. For these in particular he solicits the reader's indulgence; and will only add, that in his opinion something will have been accomplished, if he has in any degree contributed to excite attention to a portion of knowledge which, at all times, is a source of innocent amusement, and frequently the spring of a pure and constantly recurring pleasure; for, by associating the recollection of the talents and the virtues of our ancestors with the places in which 'they had their being,' we are not only most delighted with the remembrance, but also most powerfully impelled to the imitation of their excellencies.

JOHN EVANS.

Academy, Kingsdown, Bristol,
March 1816.

Directions for placing the Plates.

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TO THE SUBSCRIBERS.

THE Publisher not approving the first Plate of the View of Bristol from Clifton Wood, has had another engraved, which he presents to his numerous Subscribers gratis.

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THE
HISTORY OF BRISTOL.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

HISTORY, by presenting to the mind an authentic retrospect of the origin, progress, and vicissitudes of celebrated communities, affords an instructive gratification to human curiosity; and among the various records of the historic pen, perhaps none so strongly engages the attention as the topography of great cities, and the biography of eminent individuals. In order, therefore, to combine the advantages derivable from history in general, it may be expedient to give a concise narrative of the principal historical facts recorded in the annals of this island, especially those which have a more immediate connection with Bristol. This work will also be interspersed with short biographies of those illustrious characters, both ancient and modern, whose public zeal has contributed to the improvement, prosperity, and aggrandizement of this ancient city.

An historic sketch of the Aborigines of Britain, and a general view of the succession of public events, during the rise and progress of this powerful nation,

are, indeed, indispensably requisite for the complete elucidation of facts relative to our ancient commercial cities ; and the following work, by an adherence to authenticated records, will enable the reader to contemplate the gradual progress of our ancestors, from barbarism to civilization.

It is, indeed, the high privilege of history, to exhibit a retrospective view of mankind ; to present to the enquiring mind, a faithful representation of characters and manners which have long ceased to exist ; by an impartial portraiture, at once to reanimate the images of the great and the wise ; and thus, by a detailed series of important events, to conduct the student, through the vista of ages, to a retrospection of those interesting scenes, consecrated by the presence of our venerable ancestors.

Perhaps no nation recorded in the history of man, has a stronger claim to attention than Britain. This favorite residence of liberty, science, and virtue ; this island, which has been truly and emphatically denominated the empress of the ocean, at this moment displays whatever can gratify, inform, or dignify the human race. Happily isolated from those continental nations, who bow before martial usurpation, Britain sits secure amid her tributary waves. Her naval power, founded by the wisdom of the immortal Alfred ; promoted by the patriotism of Elizabeth ; and established in its present unparalleled strength by the House of Brunswick ; while it affords protection to our commerce and national independence, at the same time, hurls the lightning of liberty at the iron-crowned head of foreign despotism. It doubtless will be grateful to posterity, to survey, with a retrospective glance, the present unanimity and public spirit of a nation, which boldly asserts its dignity, and inviolable liberty, while the other states of Europe, by a retrogression into barbarism, relinquish their natural claims to freedom ; and, in all the degradation of vassalage, crouch before the footstool of a military adventurer.

May this happy island continue, through all successive ages, to realize the greatness, security, and independence, now enjoyed by the inhabitants ; and so admirably described by the poet in the following apostrophe :

“ Island of bliss ! amid the subject seas,
 “ That thunder round thy rocky coasts, set up,
 “ At once the wonder, terror, and delight
 “ Of distant nations, whose remotest shores
 “ Can soon be shaken by thy naval arm ;
 “ Not to be mov'd thyself, but each attempt
 “ Baffling, as thy hoar cliff the loud sea wave.”

Various have been the conjectures of antiquaries, respecting the original situation of Britain, and the state of its Aborigines. Their researches have not, however, clearly ascertained those facts ; and much ingenious disquisition has rather demonstrated the abilities of the writer, than given a satisfactory elucidation of the subject in question.

The situation of the island, its vicinity to the Continent, and the similarity of the opposite high coasts, have induced historians and poets to imagine that Britain was formerly separated from the Continent by some violent concussion of nature. A native antiquary has, with much ingenuity, proved that such an idea was merely the offspring of an effervescent imagination, adopted by romantic writers, for the embellishment of their productions. Having disproved this feasible hypothesis, by a series of reasons, equally cogent and satisfactory, this author contends that Britain has always been mentioned as an island, by the earliest tradition and historical records.

“ It has ever been,” says he, “ the glory and safety of Great Britain to be environed by the sea, and to command those waters that encompass it ; and, whilst other nations are subject to daily incursions, being separated only by rivers, hills,

or vallies, and imaginary lines, by turns one kingdom elbows out another ; but nature has set Britain such distinct bounds and limits, that its empire is preserved entire ; and, as it abounds in all things, both for the necessary delight, and support of man ; and needs not the world to sustain it, so was it always esteemed and called, *Novus Orbis*, and *Orbis Britannicus*, by reason of its greatness, and especially, separation from the Continent.*

Brutus, or Bruto, a descendant of Eneas, is recorded by our ancient historians as the first King of Britain. He invaded this island with a number of Gauls and other adventurers, Anno Mundi 2850 ; and having conquered the Aborigines, who are described as a race of giants, he settled in the country, and founded London.†

Among his successors, Malmutius, King of Cornwall, was distinguished for his valour, success and wisdom. He subjugated the other provincial Kings, and was crowned Monarch of Britain, A. M. 3529, being the first British prince who was installed with the ceremonies of a coronation. On this occasion he wore a crown of gold, a sceptre, and other regal ornaments ; and his inauguration was accompanied with all the solemnity of pagan rites.‡

This monarch may be honoured with the title of the first legislator of Britain ; and his code was termed the Malmutian laws. They were first translated out of the British language into Latin, by Gildas ; and, afterwards, out of Latin into the Saxon, by Alfred the Great. Malmutius is also recorded as the founder of Malmsbury (which probably took its name from that prince) and two neighbouring castles, Lacoc, and Tetbury.§ But the most memorable transaction in his reign, was the formation of four great roads that ran across Britain. This event is recorded by a British antiquary, with an exactness that has every mark of authenticity ;

* Sammes's *Britannia Antiqua Illustrata*, p. 36.

† Hollinshead's *British History*, p. 9.

‡ Sammes's *Britannia Antiqua Illustrata*, p. 172.

§ *Idem*.

and is the more remarkable, as one of these roads is described as leading to a direct communication with Bristol.

“ Dunwallen (or Malmutius) King of Britayne, about 483 years before the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ, seeing the subjects of his realme to be in sundry wyse opprest, by theeves, and robbers, as they traveyled to and fro; and being willing (so much as in him lay,) to redresse these inconveniences, caused his whole kingdom to be surveyed, and then, commanding some principall wayes to be made, which should lead such as traveyled into all partes thereof, from sea to sea; he gave sundry large privileges unto the same, whereby they became safe, and were much frequented.

“ The *fosse* goeth not directly, but slopewise, over the greatest part of this island; beginning at Totnesse in Devonshire, where Brute sometymes landed, or (as Ranulphus sayeth) which is more likely, at the point of Cornwall; though the eldest writers do seem to note the contrary. Frome hence it goeth thorow the middle of Devonshire, and Somersetshire, and cometh to BRISTOW, from whence it runneth manifestly to Sudbury market, Tetbury, and so forth, holdeth on as you go almost to the middle way betwene Gloucester and Cirencester, straight as a line, until you come to Cirencester itself. From Cirencester it goeth by Chepingnorton to Coventrey, Newarke, and so to Lincolne, overthwart Watling Strete, where, by general consent of all writers, (except Alfred of Beverley,) it is sayde to have an end.*”

After the demise of Malmutius, his two sons Belinus and Brennus, being left co-heirs of the kingdom, reigned conjointly, as Kings of Britain. Belinus was the founder of several cities and castles, and Brennus enlarged and improved Bristol, which was thenceforward denominated *Caer Bren*, as a public memorial

* Hollinshead's British History, p. 36.

of his munificence. It is evident, however, that Bristol had existed, as a place of some consequence, prior to the reign of the brothers; for it is mentioned as one of the towns to which a communication was opened by the Fosse, one of the principal roads made during the reign of their predecessor. But Brennus, in imitation of his brother, who improved many places in his dominions, contributed, by his royal patronage, to the prosperity of Bristol; and, as a proof that the account is not merely traditionary, antique statues of the two brothers are placed, one on each side of St. John's gate, in this city.

A further corroboration of the fact is obtainable from the ancient names of Bristol. It is classed as the seventeenth city, among the twenty-eight, which are recorded by Gildas, and Ninnius, to have existed when the Romans conquered Britain; and is distinguished by the following names. *Caer Oder Nant Badon*.—*Oder*.—*Caer Bren*.—*Venta Belgarum*, and *Brightstow*.* Among these names, *Caer Bren* has a manifest reference to the name of Brennus the reputed founder of Bristol, and seems to establish its claim to high antiquity.

Several antiquaries have written on the etymology of Bristol. The origin of its name is undoubtedly British, *Caer Brito* signifying the City of the Britons. An antiquary, whose authority is held in high estimation by the learned, is of opinion, that Bristol, in the early ages, was denominated the City *Odera*, and that *Nante Badon*, (i. e. in the vale of Bath,) was afterwards added to it, because that city was but eleven miles distant. *Nante* signifies a valley in which a river flows, and therefore it should be read *Nante Avon*, from that river.†

A native antiquary, with commendable public spirit, has refuted the assertions of the learned Camden, against the antiquity of Bristol. “Mr. Camden,” says he, “confesses that Ninnius, about eight hundred years before he published his

* Hollinshead's British History.

† Leland.

Britannia, (i. e. some years before the rise of the Saxon monarchy,) wrote a chronicle, in which he gives a catalogue of the renowned British cities in that age; and, amongst others, mentions *Caer Brito*, which Mr. Camden allows to be Bristol; and this Ninnius was an author of character and credit, and, as such, is cited by Mr. Camden on all occasions; and particularly, for the ancient name of Bristol, in the paragraph relating to that place; and yet, which is hardly credible, this very learned gentleman, styled the Prince of Antiquaries, and standard of the Criticks, does, against all established rules of argument, gravely, deliberately, positively, and in the very same page, give it as his opinion, without the least evidence in the world to support it, that Bristol rose in the declension of the Saxon government, and for no other reason, that I can see, but, because he had luckily hit on the two Saxon radicals, *bright* and *stowe*, signifying a bright, illustrious place, that when put together, form a word of nearly the same sound as Bristow.”*

Ptolemy, who wrote in the beginning of the second century, and was the first geographer who described the British isles, says, “ Under the Dobuni lie the Belgæ, and the cities Ilchester, Bath, and *Venta*,” or *Bristol*, according to the interpretation of Leland, who is of opinion, that *Venta* was formerly that city which the Saxons afterwards called Brightstowe. Hence Bristol was a capital city of the Belgæ, in the second century, and, if we trace it to the time of the royal founder, its origin, as appears from historic records, may boast the venerable antiquity of two thousand years, a period nearly equal to that of the existence of London itself.

Camden himself mentions Bristol as a celebrated city in the time of the Saxons. He says, “ it is called by the Britons *Caer Oder Nant Badon*, (i. e. the city *Odera* in *Badon Valley*.) In the catalogue of ancient cities, it is named *Caer Brito*, and in the Saxon it is *Brightstowe*, (i. e. a famous place.)†

* Hooke's Dissertation on the Antiquity of Bristol, p. 19.

† Camden's Britannia, p. 74.

Mr. Hooke concludes his Dissertation with the following cogent observations :
 “ If any credit is to be given to the positive testimonies of Ninnius and Ptolemy ; any regard paid to the opinions of Leland, Lambarde, Dr. Gale, Sir Symonds D'Ewes, and all the eminent antiquaries, except two ; if oral and written tradition, supported by *antique memorials*, still remaining on the spot ; if circumstantial and comparative evidences, corresponding with those of a more positive kind ; and just conclusions drawn from the whole, be of any force, I believe I may venture to affirm that Bristol, for eminence and antiquity, is, next to London and York, the most considerable city in England.”*

THE LIFE OF KING BRENNUS, THE FOUNDER OF BRISTOL.

Brennus, the original benefactor of Bristol, stands highly conspicuous among those ancient heroes, whose adventures and achievements have been recorded by the historian.

At the commencement of his political career, Brennus, by a partition of Britain with his brother Belinus, was put in possession of Albania, now called Scotland ; while his brother reserved to himself the fertile and extensive territory on this side of the river Humber. After a reign of six years, however, Brennus became dissatisfied with his portion of the island, and resolved on the subjugation of the whole ; and, while his ambition thus incited him to aim at absolute sovereignty, he was advised by his courtiers to solicit the aid of Elfin, King of Norway.

Accordingly, he made a voyage to that country, and was received with every demonstration of friendship by the Norwegian prince, who entered into an alliance, which was still further strengthened by the matrimonial union of his daughter with our adventurer.

† Hooke's Dissertation on the Antiquity of Bristol.

Meanwhile, Belinus received intelligence of the hostile project of his brother; in consequence of which he invaded and took possession of Albania. To increase the misfortunes of Brennus, the royal navy of Norway, with an army on board, intended for the conquest of Britain, was attacked and defeated by Guilthdacus King of Denmark, the former suitor of the Princess of Norway. This defeat was much aggravated by the capture of the bride, and the difficulty with which Brennus himself escaped.

The fleet of the victorious King of Denmark, being driven by a tempest upon the coast of Northumberland, was taken by Belinus; and, soon afterwards, Brennus, having refitted his ships, invaded Albania, with a powerful host; but, at a wood, then known by the denomination of Callater,* he was met and overcome by his brother. The unfortunate Brennus, accompanied by only twelve of his retinue, sought refuge in Gallia; and Seginus, King of Armorica, or Brittany, received him with hospitality and munificence.

The British prince, who was as remarkable for personal comeliness and courtesy of manners, as elevation of sentiment, soon ingratiated himself with the sovereign of Armorica, who gave him his only daughter in marriage, and, with the concurrence of his nobles, decreed, that, if his son-in-law should fail of male issue, he should himself be admitted lawful heir of the crown. Brennus continued for some years at the court of Seginus, enjoying the social delights of conjugal affection and friendship; but the listlessness of indolence was irksome to his active and enterprising mind; and the demise of his father-in-law at length enabled him to realize his ideas of aggrandizement.

Soon after his investiture with supreme power, he raised an army of Gauls, invaded Britain, and marched against his brother Belinus, who, apprised of his

* Now Callader.

landing, advanced to meet him at the head of a powerful host. But at the very crisis when the hostile armies were drawn out in array, awaiting the signal to begin the conflict, Conwenna, the mother of the rival brothers, interposed, and, by the irresistible eloquence of maternal persuasion and tears, effected a reconciliation.

Brennus was now admitted, by his brother, to a full participation of regal power in his native country ; and, by many acts of munificence, especially the erection of forts for the defence of the state, he established his claim to the gratitude of posterity. It was at this period that he perpetuated his name as the founder of Bristol,* and several other towns.

But ambition incited him to new projects for the extension of his power ; and, with the consent of his brother, he made preparations for a descent on Gallia, to effect the conquest of that extensive country. In this enterprize he was completely successful ; and, pursuing his ambitious designs, he, with the aid of the Gauls, crossed the Alps, and invaded Italy. Having besieged and taken the city of Chiusi in Tuscany, he proceeded in his victorious march towards Rome, then the capital of the world. He was opposed by a Roman army, within twelve miles of the city, and, after a desperate conflict, remained master of the field.—Advancing with the enthusiasm of a victor, he marched to the gates of Rome ; part of the citizens retreated to the capitol, which was well supplied with military stores and provisions ; but the Senators, in their robes, continued firmly at their post.

On entering the Senate-house, the Gauls were struck with awe at the majestic and venerable appearance of the Senators, who were seated in their chairs in silence. For a few minutes the victors contemplated those ancient fathers with the utmost reverence, conceiving them to be the gods of the Romans ; but one of the Gauls having presumed to stroke the beard of Marius

* Anno Mundi 3584.

Papyrius, was struck by that senator with a staff. The resentful Gaul slew the Roman, and this act operated as a signal for the assassination of the senators, who were all slain by those pitiless barbarians. The city was given up to the plunder and spoliation of the soldiers, but Brennus was slain during the siege of the capitol, and the Gauls were afterwards defeated and dispersed by Camillus, who was recalled from exile to head the Roman army. It must, even at this hour, afford gratification to the natives of this island, to know that a Briton conquered Rome many ages before the Romans invaded Britain.*

Commerce was introduced into Britain many ages prior to the Roman invasion. Indeed, we have historic authority† for affirming that the name of the island is of Phœnician derivation. Four hundred and fifty years before the Christian era, the British isles, including those of Scilly, were discovered by the Tyrians; who, having extended their commerce to all the shores of the Mediterranean, at length passed the streights of Gibraltar, in quest of new discoveries and sources of traffick. The ships sent on this voyage of discovery, were under the command of Hercules, who, having built several cities on the streights, and taken possession of the islands of Tartassus, Erythea, and Gades,‡ with a considerable part of the continent of Spain and Africa, proceeded on his voyage into the western seas, and discovered the Scilly islands, and the coast of Cornwall. Finding that the country abounded in tin mines, the Phœnicians named it Bratanac, or *the land of tin*. They also called this island Alpin, or Albion, which, in the Phœnician language, signifies a high mountain; and in the country of the Silures, now South Wales, there are many high cliffs called Pens, such as Penmanmawr, &c.§

* The reader, who is desirous to obtain a more full detail of the exploits of Brennus, is referred to the works of Hollinshead, Vitus, and Sir J. Price.

† Strabo.

‡ Now Minorca, Majorca, and Yvica.

§ Sammes's Brit. Antiqua Illustrata. p. 49.

When the Phœnicians landed in this island, they found it populous ; and, like judicious adventurers, instead of having recourse to the sword for their establishment, they opened an amicable commercial intercourse with the inhabitants, who permitted them to build forts and castles along the coast for the protection of their trade.

The articles of commerce furnished by the Britons, were tin and lead ; which they exchanged with the strangers for earthen ware, salt, and brazen vessels.*

This early commercial intercourse, which was probably the origin of the present wealth and glory of Britain, called into exertion the ingenuity of our ancestors ; who improved their shipping after the Phœnician model, and discovered the art of manufacturing tin and potters' clay into a variety of utensils.

The Phœnicians concealed their discovery of this island from the other maritime nations ; and, when a Roman bark was dispatched to discover the destination of one of their vessels bound for Britain, the pilot of the merchantman ran her ashore, and, at his return to Tyre, was indemnified by the state.† At this period, the inhabitants of the western part of Britain had made little progress in the arts of civilization. They are described as wearing black garments ; the men being clothed in long coats, descending to their ancles. Their feet and legs were defended with a kind of buskin, open at the toes ; and they walked with staves, like the furies in tragedy.‡

The trade of the port of Bristol was probably very considerable, even during the voyages of the Phœnicians to the western shores of Albion ; for its situation was favorable to the supply of the Silures, or people of South Wales, with those foreign articles imported from Tyre ; and considerable emolument must

* Strabo.

† Idem.

‡ Sammes's *Britannia Antiqua Illustrata*.

also have accrued to the merchants of this city, even at this early period, from the sale of their goods to the inhabitants of the fertile and populous circumjacent country.

Ancient records are generally vague, obscure, and unsatisfactory ; but we are now come to an era in the annals of Britain, equally eventful, interesting and important ; that period when the Roman legions under the banners of the invincible Cæsar, first invaded this island.

When Cæsar had completed the conquest of Gaul, his insatiable ambition stimulated him to invade Britain ; and, as a pretext for the justification of this act of hostility, he accused the Britons of having lent their aid to the Gauls, and afforded an asylum to the unsuccessful Belgæ, after having excited them to rebellion against their Roman conquerors.

Before Cæsar engaged in this dangerous enterprize, he consulted several of the continental merchants, who traded with the Britons ; and made enquiries respecting the extent of the country, and its population ; the disposition, customs and laws of the inhabitants, and their method of warfare. The information was unsatisfactory, for the merchants were totally ignorant of the internal state of the country ; their observations having been confined to a limited space along the sea coast, and the vicinity of London, the principal town of the island,

During the preparations of Cæsar for his military expedition, the Britons, who inhabited the villages on the coast, having received an intimation of his design from some of the Gallic merchants, thought it expedient to send over ambassadors with an offer of submission, and hostages as a proof of their pacific disposition. This embassy met with a gracious reception from the Roman warrior, who dismissed the messengers with an assurance of his protection. He also sent over Comius, a British prince, of whose attachment he was convinced,

and who was held in high esteem among the Britons.—This Prince had instructions to visit the different states of Britain, and exert his influence in persuading his countrymen to a general submission to Cæsar, on his arrival in the island.

But the brave, though ignorant Britons, were not to be persuaded to a tame resignation of their natural liberty; they were then a free people, and nothing but want of unanimity and discipline prevented them from being invincible to the assaults of an invader.

Even Cæsar himself seemed conscious that the subjugation of the Britons would be a difficult achievement; but nothing could deter him from the pursuit of glory, a sanguinary phantom, on whose altar he sacrificed the happiness, the liberty, and the lives of many nations.

All the requisite preparations for invasion being made, he embarked his cavalry in eighteen large transports, and the infantry in eighty vessels of inferior burthen; and sailing with a fair wind about midnight, he next morning appeared near the coast of Britain, where his hostile approach was awaited by a host of intrepid islanders, ready to oppose his landing.

This formidable appearance, and the difficulty of landing on a rocky shore, induced Cæsar to sail along the coast about eight miles further, when he came in view of an open beach, thought to be near Deal in Kent.

The Britons detached their war chariots and cavalry in the same direction, while the main body, consisting of infantry, followed, and reached the shore before the Romans were able to make a descent. Animated with all the enthusiasm of patriotic valour, the Britons furiously drove their chariots into the sea, and slew the Romans as they descended from their ships. Their impetuosity astonished the invaders, who were unable for some time to effect

a landing; while the British infantry rushed into the sea, engaging the enemy hand to hand, and boldly opposing their naked bodies to the armour of the Romans. Who can withhold his admiration of the generous ardour of our ancestors, who so bravely repelled the conquerors of the Continent? May the recollection of their magnanimity continue to inspire their descendants with similar virtue and resolution, and enable them to defend their native land from the evils of invasion, till time shall be no more!

Notwithstanding the heroism of the Britons, however, the superior discipline of their opponents eventually prevailed; and, after a well-contested battle, in which veteran valour overcame the natural intrepidity of patriotism, Cæsar and his victorious legions landed in Britain.

After their partial defeat, the Britons sent ambassadors to Cæsar, with pacific overtures, which were accepted by the conqueror. Indeed he seems conscious, even from his own account, of his inability to subdue the nation. Yet this invasion, though fatal to the independence of those Britons, who inhabited that part of the sea-coast, was eventually beneficial to the nation, by the introduction of the polished arts of civilized society.

“ The Roman taught thy stubborn knee to bow,
 “ Though twice a Cæsar could not bend thee now.
 “ His victory was that of orient light,
 “ When the sun’s shafts disperse the gloom of night;
 “ Thy language at this distant moment shews,
 “ How much the country to the conqueror owes;
 “ Expressive, energetic, and refin’d,
 “ It sparkles with the gems he left behind.”

Cæsar, who is not only celebrated as a warrior, but an author, has left an interesting record of the state of that part of Britain, which came within the

reach of his observation, when he invaded the island. The inland districts were inhabited by the Aborigines, the sea-coast by adventurers from Belgium. The Aborigines were numerous; they lived in cottages or huts thatched with straw, like those of the Gauls; their principal employment was pastoral, and their chief subsistence derived from their flocks and herds; for they were unskilful in the art of tillage. They were taller of stature than the Gauls, wore their hair long and flowing down the back and shoulders, and shaved all the beard except what grew on the upper lip. They were divided into three classes, the Druids, or priests; the Equites, or nobles, who commanded in war; and the Plebeians, or common people. The peculiar manners of the Druids are unknown to posterity; but their authority, influence, and religious rites, have been fully ascertained. Strabo and Cæsar have left a description only of the customs and manners of the laity: probably the reserve of the Druids, and their solitary seclusion, precluded the observations of these writers.

With respect to the nobles, denominated by Cæsar the Equites, their principal garment was called *Gaunacum*, from which our word *gown* is probably derived; it was made of coarse wool, with a knap on both sides, and well calculated to repel the humidity or cold of the atmosphere. Another garment much worn by the Britons, was called *bardiacus*. It was made of fine wool, of curious interwoven colours, similar to the particoloured garment yet worn in the highlands of Scotland. The principal clothing of the common people was composed of the skins of beasts, and many of them went almost naked. Before a battle they painted their bodies blue with the ashes of sea-weed, to render themselves more terrible to their enemies.*

Their money consisted of brass or iron rings, of value proportionate to the size or weight.—The intercourse of the sexes was promiscuous; yet the

* Cæsar says they coloured their bodies with glass. "Omnes Britanni se glasto inficiunt quod cæruleum efficit colorem, atque hoc horribiliore sunt in pugna aspectu." Com. lib. 7.

women were not destitute of delicacy ; for Queen Boadicea, in her address to the army, expatiated on the virtue of chastity.*

The administration of justice was vested in the Druids ; whose power was absolute over their superstitious votaries. They held nothing more sacred than the mistletoe, and the oak on which it grew ; it was considered by them as a gift sent from heaven ; and, when they found it, the day on which it was cropped was devoted to festivity. Their temples were open at the top, and were composed of a circle of massy stone pillars, with a sloping altar in the centre, and a stone obelisk near it.

But the most unnatural, as well as horrible, of their religious rites, was the sacrifice of human victims ; which, however, only took place on some important occasion. They considered criminals, or wicked men, as the most acceptable sacrifice to their gods ; but sometimes even innocent persons suffered. For this purpose, a colossal image of wicker work was constructed, and fastened to the obelisk, in the centre of their temple. The inside of the hollow body and limbs of this image was then filled with living men, and, after some preparatory rites, it was set on fire, and the victims perished amid the smoke and flame.†

This barbarous practice was probably introduced by the Phœnicians, when they traded to the western coast of Britain. Sometimes a human victim was sacrificed for the purpose of divination. The druid having stabbed the victim, prognosticated good or evil fortune from the appearance of the streaming blood, or the convulsions of the frame ; and afterwards made his omens from the inspection of the entrails.‡

These inhuman ceremonies are described by a great, though unfortunate poet, a native of Bristol, with a degree of animation which strongly excites horror.§

* Sammes's *Britannia Antiqua Illustrata*. p. 226. † *Cæsar's Com.* ‡ *Diodorus Siculus.* § Chatterton.

" Ye dreary altars, by whose side,
 " The druid priest, in crimson dy'd,
 " The solemn dirges sung;
 " And drove the golden knife
 " Into the palpitating seat of life,
 " While rent with horrid shouts the distant valleys rung !

" The bleeding body bends,
 " The gloomy purple stream ascends,
 " While the troubled spirit near
 " Hovers in the steamy air,
 " Again the sacred dirge they sing,
 " Again the distant hill and coppice-valley ring."

Another poet, whose works will delight and instruct successive generations, has also described the rites of the Druids with his usual energy.

" Thy Druids struck the well-hung harps they bore,
 " With fingers deeply dy'd in human gore ;
 " And while the victim slowly bled to death,
 " Upon the rolling chords rung out his dying breath."

Notwithstanding the superstition of the Druids, their doctrine concerning futurity is entitled to respect. One of the principal points they taught was the immortality and transmigration of souls. This doctrine they inculcated with great zeal ; for they conceived it most proper for the excitement of courage, a virtue of the utmost importance to the state in those warlike ages. They also delivered orations or lectures, concerning the motions of the heavenly bodies ; the magnitude of the heavens and the earth ; the nature of things ; and the power and majesty of the immortal gods.*

* *Cæsar's Commentaries.*

Soon after the conquest of Britain by the Romans in the reign of Nero, when Setonius reduced the isle of Anglesey, which was the last asylum of the druids, he exterminated them so suddenly, that all the traditionary knowledge transmitted to them, in the songs of their predecessors, was lost to the world; a circumstance much to be regretted by the antiquary and historian, for such oral communications would have been invaluable, as illustrative of the origin, customs and manners of our ancestors.

It is uncertain, at what period the Phœnicians relinquished their commerce with the western part of Britain. Some political concussion at home might have interrupted a trade so advantageous to the Tyrians, and so beneficial to the Britons. Their commercial intercourse was entirely abandoned, when the Roman power prevailed over this part of the island.

The early traffic of the Phœnicians with the western Britons; the remoteness of this part of the island from the districts over-run by the victorious Romans; and the resolution with which their legions were resisted by the Silures, who secured a temporary independence, by a retreat into the mountainous tracts of the country, will justify the conclusion, that the inhabitants of Bristol were comparatively opulent and respectable. This city must, from its situation as a frontier town, have been a place of great importance; and its progressive trade and manufactures were, in all probability, not inferior to those of London itself. The metropolis was subject to the insults of every invader; while Bristol, remote from Gallic and Roman adventurers, was, for a considerable period after the first descent of Cæsar, preserved by its situation, from the devastations of war. The early maritime traffick of this city was, however, inconsiderable; a few barks employed as coasters constituting the whole of its shipping; but even this trade gave Bristol a decided superiority over every other port on the western coast of the island; and contributed to the gradual prosperity and civilization of its inhabitants.

After the assassination of Julius Cæsar, during the interregnum of the Romans, and to the time of the Emperor Claudius, the Britons were under the dominion of their own kings, and governed by their own laws. Consequently in their traffick with the Continent, they paid the customs and duties required by the Romans, not as an acknowledgement of submission, but to obtain the advantages of commerce.

Intestine commotions, however, fomented by the ambition of petty princes, from time to time involved the Britons in the miseries of civil war. The leaders of the unsuccessful faction found an asylum at Rome, which exasperated the Britons to such a degree, that they committed acts of open hostility against those Romans, who had settled in the island as merchants.*

The Emperor Claudius sent Plautius with an expedition against the Britons, to revenge this injury; and, afterwards, invaded Britain in person, with a powerful army.† He landed at the mouth of the Thames, and advanced to attack the Britons, who, impatient of delay, came to a general engagement, in which the Romans obtained a complete victory. This conquest was secured by the wisdom and clemency of Claudius, who merely disarmed the Britons; and, having appointed Plautius his lieutenant in Britain, he sailed from this island, at the expiration of sixteen days from the time of his landing. On the return of Claudius to Rome, he was honored with a magnificent triumph; and received the sir-name of Britannicus.

But these honors, so ostentatiously conferred on the Roman Emperor, by the gratitude or vanity of his countrymen, originated in their ignorance of the real state of Britain at this period; for, so far were the inhabitants from yielding a general submission to the invader, that they sought security in their woods and morasses. A considerable part of the island was, indeed, occupied by the Romans; but the western and northern districts remained unconquered.

* Dion. Cass.

† A. D. 44.

Arviragus was King of those Britons who still preserved their freedom ; he succeeded his brother Guiderius in regal authority ; was crowned A. D. 45 ; and, by his prudence and valour, protected his subjects from the degradation of submitting to foreign power.

In the sixth year of his reign, Christianity was promulgated in Britain ; and a short account of this interesting event will illustrate the history of the Western Britons.

We are informed by an ancient writer* of acknowledged veracity, that Joseph of Arimathea was sent over to Britain, by the apostle Philip, to convert the inhabitants to Christianity. He first preached the gospel at Glastonbury, in Somersetshire, where he not only converted the inhabitants, but also their King to the Christian faith, a fact which is recorded in the following lines, written by Harding :

“ Joseph converted the King Arviragus,

“ By his preaching to know the law divine ;

“ And baptiz'd him as written hath Ninnius,

“ The Chronicler in Britain tongue full fine.”

The fact that the inhabitants of the western part of Britain embraced the Christian religion in the first century, is also recorded by a Roman author,† whose authority is a corroboration of the circumstance. Indeed those numerous testimonies tend to establish a fact, which reflects the highest honor on the understanding and virtue of our ancestors ; by proving that they became zealous converts to a religion, which had a direct tendency to humanize their hearts, and render them at once enlightened and happy ; while their southern countrymen were yet under the two-fold yoke of Roman despotism, and Pagan superstition.

* Ninnius.

† Tertullian.

The first Christian church in Britain, is recorded to have been founded by Joseph of Arimathea, at a place called Ines Withen, in the British language, but now known by the name of Glastonbury,* which was granted to him for that purpose by Arviragus. This church was small, and built of rude materials, such as composed the architecture of that age. The particulars of this transaction were engraved on a brass plate, fixed on a pillar, in the new church, and preserved, after the demolition of Glastonbury Abbey, in the reign of Henry VIII. The inscription is in Latin, to the following purport :

“ In the year thirty-one, from the passion of our Lord, there arrived here twelve holy men, of whom Joseph of Arimathea was chief; who built in this place the first church of this kingdom. He appointed a burial-place, and dedicated the church in honour of the mother of Christ; David, archbishop of Menew, attesting the same. Afterwards the same bishop, the number of the saints of that church increasing, added to it, on the eastern part, a chancel, which he consecrated in honour of the blessed virgin; the altar of which, for a memorial to future ages, he adorned with a saphire of inestimable value; and, lest the original place and dimensions of that church, might in consequence of such augmentation, be forgotten, there was a column or pillar erected, in a line drawn through the eastern corner of it, towards the south, dividing it from the chancel. The length of the church from that line towards the west, was sixty feet; its breadth twenty-six feet; and the distance of the centre of the column, from the middle point, between the corners, forty-eight feet.”

Joseph of Arimathea, the founder, was entombed at the south angle of the oratory; and, near his grave, St. Patrick, the first Abbot of this place, was also interred, beneath a stone pyramid, which was afterwards overlaid with silver.†

* Sammes's Brit. Ant. Illustr. p. 112.

† Melkinus.

The walls of this church were made of intertwined twigs, supported by posts, driven into the ground; the roof was thatched with straw; and of such materials were even the palaces of our ancient kings composed. But soon after the erection of this church, the ancient Britons were instructed by the Romans in the art of building houses and fortifications of stone. Many vestiges of their encampments remain in this island; and, among others, the ruins of a fortified camp on Clifton-Hill, and two others on the opposite bank of the Avon.

In the reign of the Roman Emperor Claudius, the proprætor Ostorius, a man of consummate military talents and experience, was appointed general of the Roman army in Britain. On his arrival in this island, he experienced much annoyance from the unsubdued Britons; who made frequent inroads into the districts occupied by their countrymen, who had formed an alliance with the Romans.

Ostorius, by a vigorous effort, subdued the southern part of the island, which he formed into a province; he afterwards marched into the country of the Cangî, a small territory in Somersetshire. Having succeeded in the subjugation of the Cangî, he disarmed them, and, to prevent a revolt, took possession of the heights, on the banks of the Avon and Severn, which he fortified as a chain of posts, calculated, from their elevated situation, to command a view of the circumjacent country, and overawe the natives. We are informed by a Roman historian, that Ostorius maintained his authority over the inhabitants on the banks of the Avon and Severn, by surrounding them with camps.* A proof that our ancestors submitted with great reluctance to the sovereignty of a foreign state; and that the population of Bristol was not only considerable, but formidable.

When Ostorius had thus taken possession of, and fortified Bristol, and its vicinity, he resolved to complete the conquest of the island. Leaving a garrison

* Tacitus.

at the camp on Clifton-Down, he crossed the Severn at Aust passage, which antiquaries agree has taken its name from this warrior; and invaded the country of the Silures, or inhabitants of South Wales. Those brave, and hitherto unconquered people, were then ruled by Caractacus, a hero famous in history. He was a prince of great prudence and magnanimity, equally distinguished for his intrepidity in the field, and his patriotism in the government of the state. This hero, having collected his forces, encamped with his army in Shropshire, on a hill called *Caer Caradoc*, a post which was strong by nature, and fortified by art.

On this hill, he waited the attack of the Roman legions; and, on the approach of Ostorius, prepared for battle. Caractacus excited the courage of his warriors with the persuasive and energetic eloquence of patriotism. He invoked the names of his glorious ancestors, whose bravery had repelled Cæsar himself; and hitherto preserved the people from the ignominious yoke of the enemy. He exhorted his countrymen to defend their liberties, their altars, their wives, and their children, from dishonour and slavery. "This is the day, and this the field!" exclaimed Caractacus, "in which Britain will recover her liberty, or be reduced to perpetual slavery." The troops, with acclamations, and all the enthusiasm of generous patriotism, voluntarily bound themselves, by a solemn oath, to conquer or die; and that neither darts nor wounds should compel them to yield.

The formidable appearance and ardour of the Silures startled Ostorius; who beheld a river apparently unfordable in his front; a rampire on the opposite bank; and the steep hills covered with armed men. But his soldiers were unappalled, and, eager for the contest, loudly demanded the signal to begin the attack; exclaiming that to brave men nothing was impregnable. The Romans then crossed the river, and, after a conflict maintained with the utmost heroism by both armies, the superior discipline of the Romans, and their auxiliaries, prevailed over the native valour of the Britons, whose overthrow was fatal to

the independence of their country. This event happened in the ninth year of the invasion of Britain in the reign of Claudius Cæsar ;* and after the defeat of the Silures, Ostorius returned to the fortified camp near Bristol, which was peculiarly favourable for the purposes of defence and observation ; and situated in a fertile country, affording abundant supplies of provisions for his army.

From the form of the ancient City of Bristol ; and its having been walled with stone, it is probable, that it was rebuilt and fortified by the directions of Ostorius ; the four principal streets being made to correspond with the four cardinal points, which was the usual form of Roman cities.† Indeed, the advantageous situation of Bristol, on the banks of a navigable river, was a sufficient inducement to the conqueror, to provide for its future security and defence.

The vestiges of the labors of Ostorius are still perceptible in the vicinity of Bristol ; where the ruins of three Roman camps impress the mind of the antiquarian with enthusiastic veneration. A Roman station on the high banks of the Avon, consisting of three distinct camps, commanded the river and circumjacent country, for many miles. The principal of these camps was situated on Clifton Down ; another, directly opposite, on the south-west bank of the Avon, called Bower-walls ; and the third on the verge of Leigh-Down, of smaller extent, on a projecting part of the bank, further down the river.

There is a romantic description of these ruins recorded in the fifteenth century, by a native of Bristol. This chronicler, however, seemed more inclined to adopt the traditional legend of the vulgar, than investigate the origin of those fortifications by rational enquiry.

“ The fortified camp,” says he, “ upon the high ground, not distant a quarter of a mile from Clifton-cliff, is said by vulgar people to be there founded

* A. D. 54.

† Tacitus.

before the time of William the Conqueror, by Saracens or Jews, or by one Ghyst, a giant. And, as a proof that such a fortress was in all likelihood founded there in ancient times, there remains to this day, in an extensive circle, a heap of stones great and small. It is wonderful to behold those circular ruins, lying in such order. They seem to be the remains of a strong castle, which is said to have stood on this spot, for some hundreds of years past, but is now nearly levelled with the ground. It is an honour and ornament to my native city Bristol, and a proof of its antiquity, to have the foundation of such a noble fortress or camp; and I write this as a record of its existence.”*

The name of Saracens was probably given by the common people to the Romans; but mere tradition is insufficient for the establishment of a fact; and various circumstances shall be adduced, as proofs that these fortifications were originally erected by the conquerors of the world. A description of the Roman manner of encampment will furnish the antiquarian with evidence, at once curious and important, in favour of the assertion, that Clifton Down and the opposite eminence, on the western bank of the Avon, were once a Roman station, and fortified by Ostorius, when he extended his conquests to this quarter of the island.

The military system and discipline of the Romans was a model of regularity. A legion originally consisted of three thousand infantry and three hundred cavalry, which was afterwards augmented by Caius Marius, to the number of six thousand two hundred. The number of legions was twenty, or upwards, according to the increase of population, and the nature or extent of their warfare.

Their defensive armour was compleat, and their offensive weapons consisted of a pile, or long dart, and a sword, and dagger. When on their march, in an enemy's country, a centurion went before with the advanced guard, to choose a convenient place for encamping; which, when practicable, was always on an

* William of Worcester, who was parish clerk in St. James's Priory, Bristol, in the year 1480.

eminence, and near the banks of a river. The highest ground was first marked out for the *prætorium*,* or pavilion for the general. The form of the *prætorium* was circular; it was high and surmounted with a white flag, contained the tribunal or chair of state; the augurale or place of divination; and other appendages of supreme authority.

Around the *prætorium*, an area of one hundred feet in extent, on every side, was marked out; and, on the side most convenient for water and forage, the legions were encamped; each being separated by a street, fifty feet in breadth; and stationed according to the degree of honor which they held in the army. The centre was accounted the most honourable post, and the extremities of the camp, an inferior station.

The *principia* was a way of one hundred feet in breadth, which extended throughout the camp, between the maniples or subdivisions of every legion, and the *prætorium*. In this space the tribunes sat occasionally to administer justice; the principal officers of the army frequented it as a place of recreation, and the soldiers amused themselves with different athletic and military exercises.

Every tribune had his tent pitched at the head of his legion, and the legates and treasures were stationed nearer to the *prætorium*.

The encampment was encompassed by a ditch and rampire, two hundred feet distant from the tents; that the soldiers, marching into the camp in battle array, might, without confusion, be formed in subdivisions; or drawn up in regular order, before they advanced to attack an enemy. The fortification was also made at this distance from the tents, that the soldiers might be protected from the darts and other missile weapons of the enemy.† The tents were made of skins

* This pavilion took its name from the generalissimo of the army, who was formerly called *Prætor*.

† Polybius.

or hides supported by stakes driven into the ground, and fastened with cords. Each tent contained eleven soldiers; this society was denominated *contubernium*; and the principal person, who was commonly a veteran, was called *caput contubernii*. Every soldier was sworn not only not to commit theft, but if they found any thing to bring it to the tribunes.

The camp was fortified by the whole army; the soldiers, armed with their swords and daggers, made the ditch; every maniple having a proportionate part measured out, under the superintendence of the officers. The ditch was generally eight feet wide, and eight deep. Of the earth which they cast inwards, a rampire was formed, faced towards the trench, with turf cut regularly; or, if there was no turf, they strengthened the loose earth with boughs and faggots. The rampire, from the verge of the ditch, formed a breast-work, fortified on the outside with thick sharp stakes deeply fastened in the ground.

The camp had four gates; the first, or *porta prætoria*, which was in the rear of the general's tent, commonly faced the east. By the opposite gate the soldiers went to fetch their wood, water, and forage. The two other gates stood opposite to both ends of that respected place, which they called *principia*. These gates were secured by doors; and, in standing camps, fortified with turrets; upon which were placed the *balista* or sling, and other defensive engines.

The Romans divided the night into four watches, every watch containing three hours; the first commencing at six o'clock in the evening, and the last ending at six in the morning.—These watches were distinguished by different notes of the trumpet, the charge of sounding, which belonged to the chief centurion of a legion, at whose tent the trumpeters attended, to be directed by his hour-glass.

The chief standard of every legion was an eagle, and the ensign of a manipule was a dragon, wolf or sphinx, with the head towards the enemy.*

When the commander in chief had determined to fight, a scarlet flag was hoisted above the prætorium, as a signal to the soldiers to prepare for battle; the sound of many trumpets together, was the second signal; and the third was a short harangue or oration, to encourage the troops, and confirm their valour by rational motives.—Such was the regularity, discipline, and prudence with which a Roman army was conducted to victory.

From the foregoing sketch, it must be evident, on a survey of the place, that Clifton-down was formerly a Roman station. The importance of the situation induced Ostorius to fortify it in the best manner; but there was a deviation from the usual regular square of the Roman camp; the circular hill on which he encamped requiring him to adopt a similar form in his fortification. Yet there is a visible regularity in his outworks, particularly the ditches and rampires, with which this station was fortified, approaching as nearly as the hill would admit, to the square form of other Roman fortifications. The most elevated part of the hill, where the prætorium undoubtedly stood, is indeed semicircular; but the opposite quarter, where the *porta decumana* was placed, and which led directly to the river, presents a regular line, which, when fortified, must have been impregnable, as well as inaccessible to an enemy.

There appears to have been a communication between the camp on Clifton Down and those on the opposite bank of the river, by a ford across the Avon. This ford, the bottom of which consisted of solid rock, existed till within these few years; but, being a bar to the shipping, it was blown up with gunpowder.

A variety of Roman coins and utensils dug up by Sir William Draper, and other antiquaries, among the ruins of the camp on Clifton Down, afford

* Trajan's column at Rome is adorned with sculptured ensigns with these devices.

sufficient proofs of its origin, though the researches of the curious tend to destroy the vestiges of this station; some of which are however still visible. The other camps on the opposite bank, have escaped the scrutinizing research of the antiquary, and are therefore more perfect; that known by the name of Bower Walls is overgrown with wood; and several traces of ancient masonry are still perceptible among its mouldering ruins. How different now the appearance of these once important fortifications, where the Roman eagles, displayed on the airy summits, in all the pomp of military sway, overawed and intimidated the ancient Britons, compelling them either to submit to foreign power, or preserve their independence amid the woods and morasses of South Wales.

The remains of the camp on Rownham-hill, directly opposite to Clifton Down, exhibit the most perfect traces of the Roman manner of fortification. It is generally called Bower walls, a name probably first given to it by some fanciful individual who planted with wood, the spot once occupied by warriors.

It is nearly as extensive as the camp on Clifton Down, and displays its once formidable triple ditches and rampires, in a semicircular form, along a space of at least five hundred yards in extent, enclosing an area sufficiently capacious to contain an army of 10,000 men; and bounded by the verge of a dingle on the northern side, and the indented bank of the Avon on the east. The outer and the second trenches and rampires appear to have been made on the plain, and doubtless were principally intended to resist the first shock of assailants; but the third trench is deep, and a fortification of solid masonry, built on a thick rampire, and twelve feet higher than the outworks, must at the period when it was raised have been impregnable. The masonry is composed of small stones, strongly cemented with lime, part of which has withstood the efforts of time, during the lapse of thirteen centuries. Traces of three entrances to this camp are still visible. The widest, which probably led to the *principia*, is on the south west side of the fortification; but it could have no correspondent gate-way on the opposite side of the camp, which is bounded by a precipice of

at least three hundred feet deep, which forms the bank of the Avon opposite Clifton down.

A narrower entrance on the eastern side, which probably was the *porta prætoria*, is nearly opposite to a third gate-way, which, from its situation, on the verge of the dingle, must doubtless have been the *porta decumana*, or gate by which the troops went out for wood, water, and forage; and through which criminals were conducted to execution. There have been various conjectures respecting the situation of the *prætorium* in this camp; but we are yet left in a state of indecision, as the place marked out for the general's pavilion seems to have been optional, or according to circumstances. An antiquary describes the *porta prætoria* as being "always situated behind the general's tent; and this gate did usually look towards the east, or to the enemy, or that way the army was to march.*" The *prætorium* is described by Polybius, as being always placed in the most elevated part of the camp, commanding a view of it, and the circumjacent country. Hence it must have been placed in this camp on the eastern side, near the bank of the Avon; a situation, which afforded a full view of the other encampments, and enabled the commanding officers to communicate by signals.

This camp has long been planted with a variety of trees; particularly, the oak, ash, and elm, which extend their pleasant embowering shades, and offer a delightful shelter from the heat of summer, to numerous parties of pleasure who frequent these romantic scenes. The dingle is also planted with trees, that rise along its banks, presenting a picturesque scene, which is still more grateful to the lover of nature, by its contrast with the barren rocks that extend along the northern side of the Avon, beneath Clifton Down. The river, winding amid its rocky shores, also presents a beautiful object, and the scenery is often enlivened

* Sammes's Brit. Antiqua Illust. p. 380.

by the transient appearance of a ship towed into port, deeply laden with the choicest produce of foreign climes. Yet, amid all the beauties of the rich, romantic, and varied scenery, presented by a landscape, which affords the richest display of fertility, picturesque sublimity, and ornamental architecture, animated by a happy population; the venerable ruins of this ancient fortification, once manned by the intrepid conquerors of the world, have a tendency to inspire the contemplative mind with more enthusiastic emotions, than those excited even by the beautiful perfection of art and nature.

From the camp on Rownham-hill there is a communication with that on Leigh Down, by the deep and narrow dingle, or by passing along the verge of this valley, to its extremity on the Down. Stoke-leigh camp is the smallest of the three, situated on a projecting part of the bank of the Avon, to the N. W. of the camp on Rownham-hill, and somewhat lower than the fortification on Clifton-hill. It is fortified on the south and south-west, by two trenches and rampires, the outer bank is comparatively low, and the inner rampire, ten feet thick at the top, and gradually broader towards the base, composed of earth and stone, without any apparent intermixture of mortar, rises at least ten feet above the level of the camp; and, with a ditch, eight feet deep, must impress the beholder with a lively idea of its former strength.

The principal, or western entrance, crossed the first trench, and through the rampire, into the second ditch, which led to another gateway, immediately communicating with the interior of the camp. Hence the assailants, if successful in forcing the outworks, would afterwards be obliged to pass along a space of sixty yards, exposed to the darts, and other missile weapons of the besieged, before they could penetrate into the interior.

An extensive narrow wall, with a ditch, may be traced from the northern extremity of this camp, to a considerable distance along the Down; and it



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THE HOTWELL HOUSE, seen from the ROCKS at CLIFTON.

probably enclosed a repository for forage, and a separate place for the horses belonging to the army.

The entrance at the northern side of this camp, is conjectured by Mr. Barrett to have led to the prætorium, the scite of which he describes as surrounded with a trench. But not a single vestige of this intrenchment is now discoverable, and that it never existed, is extremely probable; for the prætorium, and its area, including a circular space of two hundred feet in diameter,* was situated so as to afford an easy communication with every other part of the camp; and it also was sufficiently defended by the general fortifications.

The supposition of the existence, at this early period, of a general chain of communication by forts erected on heights, seems also erroneous; for the Roman army, under the command of Ostorius, had no reason to apprehend an attack from the Britons, after the defeat of Caractacus. It does not appear that Ostorius received any of his reinforcements, or military supplies, by water; for it was during the government of Agricola, that Britain was first discovered by the Romans to be an island. Hence Ostorius, who had nothing to fear from any sudden attack, probably thought himself sufficiently secure in those fortified camps, which were rather established to overawe a conquered people, than resist the assaults of a powerful enemy.

After the final departure of the Romans from Britain, these fortified camps afforded an occasional protection to the western Britons when assailed by the Scots and Picts; and afterwards when the Saxons conquered this country, they doubtless not only availed themselves of the fortified posts formerly occupied by the conquerors of the world, but extended and strengthened those works by additional fortifications.—It is not improbable that Alfred the Great built the

* Polybius.

forts supposed by Mr. Barrett and other antiquarians to have been raised by the Romans. As a corroboration of this conjecture it may be mentioned that the English were unskilled in architecture at that period, and consequently the forts built by them have long since sunk into ruins, while the ancient cement of the Romans continues to this day, almost as hard as the stones it binds.

When the Danish barbarians overran England, at the commencement of the eleventh century, almost every monument of national skill was destroyed by those rude conquerors. But notwithstanding their ferocity and ignorance, they had sufficient sagacity to occupy the different fortifications; and, among others, the ancient Roman station near Bristol, which, from its situation, was peculiarly favourable to the security of a maritime intercourse with their piratical countrymen. It is well known that the ancient Danes were enterprising navigators, who for ages harassed and plundered the other maritime nations of Europe. When they conquered England, they built a number of forts on the hills throughout the kingdom, which, when occupied by troops, enabled them to keep up a general communication. Several of those forts were erected along the banks of navigable rivers, and when the Danes were apprehensive of an insurrection of the natives, they were thus enabled to receive requisite reinforcements from the Continent; or, if defeated, to retreat to their shipping for security.

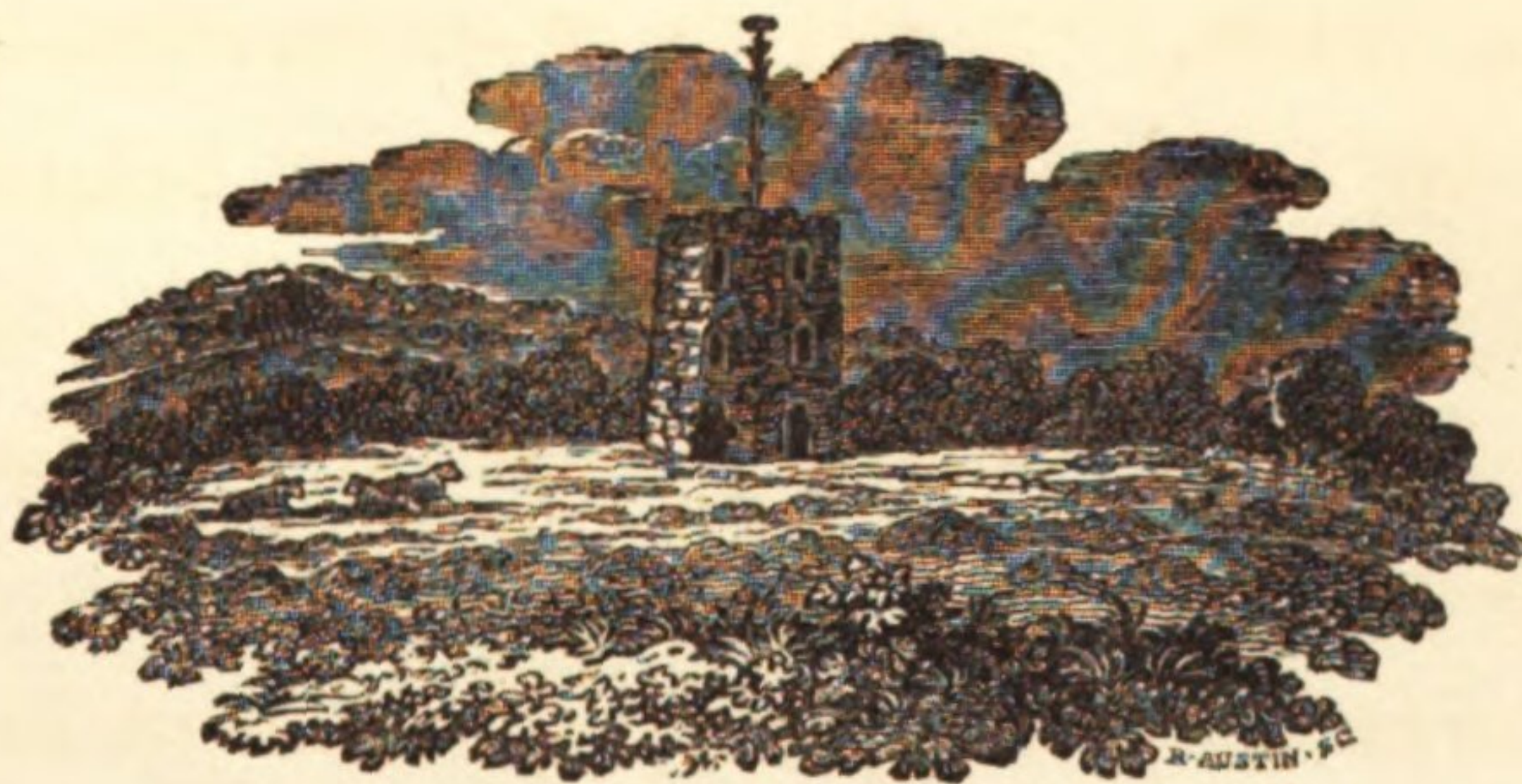
Their unskilfulness in the art of fortification is manifest from the ruins of their forts, which were commonly circular, consisting of earth and stones, and surrounded with a deep ditch. But that they occupied the stronger forts erected by the Saxons on the banks of the Avon, cannot be doubted. In those early ages, indeed, mankind trusted more to personal prowess than the protection of a fortress; hence we frequently read of the besieged sallying forth and repelling the besiegers hand to hand. Those hardy and fierce northern nations, known by the name of Danes, were not deficient in that daring valour,

which probably occasioned them to be the more negligent in the erection of military works, which were in general built for temporary purposes, and of perishable materials.

For the more complete illustration of the antiquities of Bristol and its vicinity, the camp on Clifton Down was dug up in several places in the year 1808; but those researches were unproductive, nothing curious being found except a part of a Roman or Danish dagger.*

Similar researches were also made in the two camps on the opposite bank of the Avon, but without success. Stoke-leigh camp was discovered to be founded on solid rock, covered with a thin stratum of soil or mould, which was probably accumulated from the adjacent down. This camp was not planted with trees like that on the adjacent eminence, where the soil is deeper: yet even there no ancient coins, armour, or utensils, were discoverable. It is indeed improbable that the Roman army, commanded by Ostorius, buried any part of their treasure in the camps near Bristol, for it does not appear from history, that there was a battle fought between them and the Britons in this neighbourhood, and it was customary for them to conceal their money beneath the earth, only when they expected an engagement with an enemy.

* It is now in the possession of the publisher.

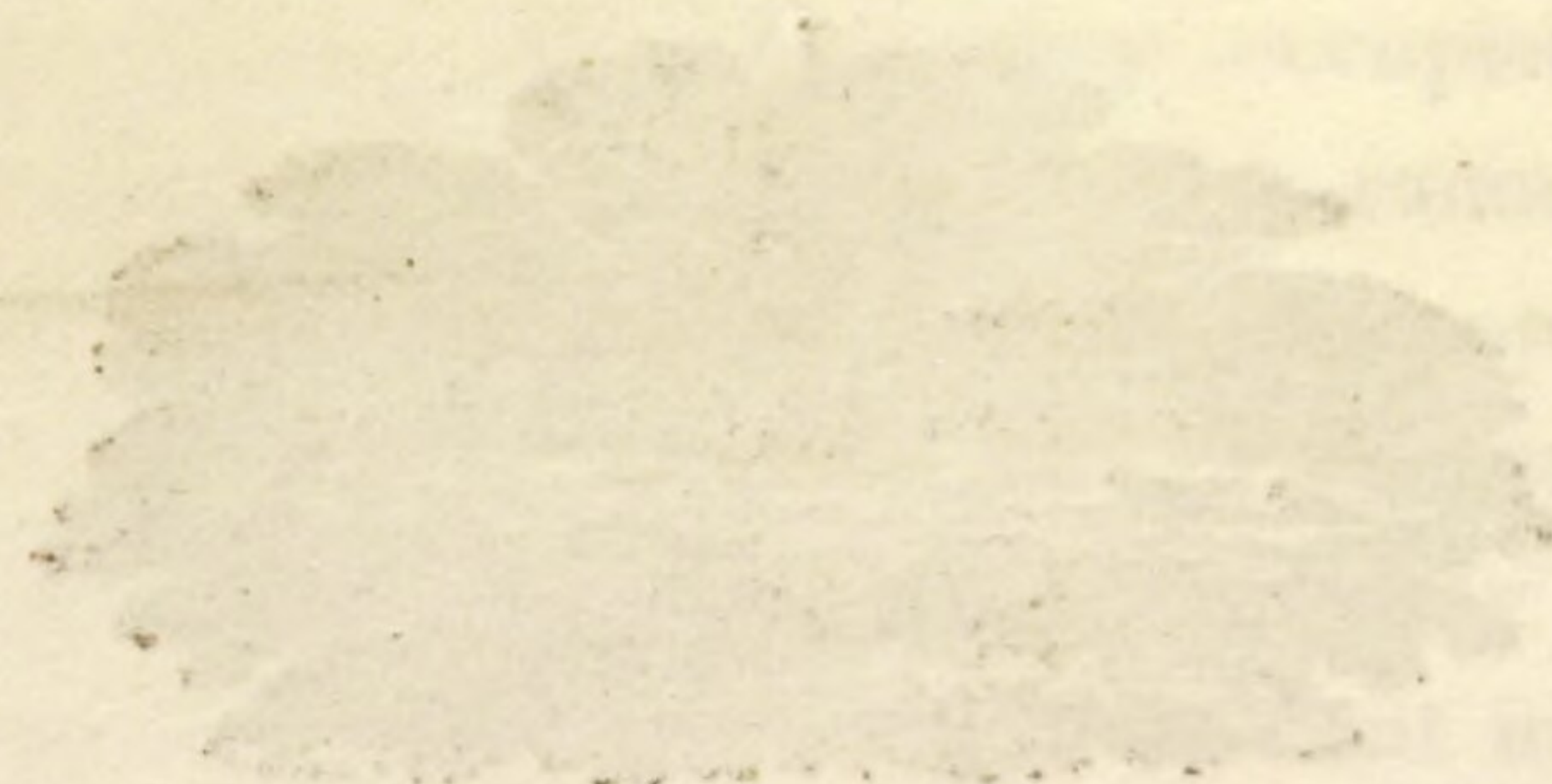


which probably occasioned them to be the more negligent in the erection of military works, which were in general built for temporary purposes, and of portable materials.

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THE extension of the Roman power and influence to the western part of Britain, is an eventful era in the history of Bristol; for it is remarkable, that the victorious progress of those foreign conquerors to this city, and the promulgation of christianity within its walls, happened at nearly the same period of time. Joseph of Arimathea first preached the gospel in the country of the Cangi, about the middle of the first century; and, at the same period, Ostorius took possession of Bristol, and encamped with his legions on the high banks of the Avon in the vicinity of the city. Hence the accession of both Divine and human knowledge thus communicated to the inhabitants of Bristol, must have had a powerful influence in the melioration of their manners, the exaltation of their religious ideas, and their advancement in those useful and elegant arts which contribute to the improvement and happiness of mankind.

A circumstantial detail of the gradual improvement of this great community in population, manufactures, and commerce, would afford a high gratification to the curiosity of the general reader, and contribute to an elucidation of that progression of the human mind from barbarism to refinement, which is so grateful to the moral philosopher. But such complete and authenticated

documents of the ancient state of Bristol, and the various vicissitudes experienced by its inhabitants, are unattainable from the obscure writings of monkish historians. Their researches and studies were chiefly confined to the ecclesiastical history of those dark ages,—the foundation of monasteries, eulogiums on their regal or noble benefactors, and ridiculous stories of pretended miracles, which constitute the very essence of the information communicated by their records. The transactions of commerce were considered as unworthy of notice by men who could obtain the wealth of the industrious without effort. We must, however, avail ourselves of even the imperfect memorials of past ages, supplied by those chroniclers, whose pages present us with a misty retrospect of the general state of Britain and its inhabitants. Several hints on this subject, though evidently dictated by prejudice, are also obtainable from the elegant productions of the Roman historians.

When the Romans extended their conquests to the northern and western tracts of Britain, their intercourse with the inhabitants was much impeded by woods and morasses. The four principal highways through Britain, having in the lapse of ages become almost impassable, were repaired by Trajan about the close of the first century.

But the advantages generally derivable by the natives and their conquerors from this facility of intercourse, were dearly purchased by those Britons who were employed in this great public work. For the roads were repaired and paved by the natives, under the direction of Romans, who compelled them to work like slaves.—Hence they justly complained that the Romans stood over them like relentless task-masters, compelling them to labour with stripes and indignities, consuming their strength and wearing out their limbs in clearing away woods and paving fens.*

* Tacitus

It would be tedious to give a detail of the struggles made by the Britons for their emancipation, during the ascendancy of Roman power in this island. But it ought to be observed, that notwithstanding the loss of their independence, they derived many benefits from their intercourse with a people who introduced the useful and ornamental arts wherever their arms prevailed.

In the reign of Domitian, Britain was governed by Agricola, who established the Roman power in this island, and immortalized his name by a decisive victory over the Caledonii, under the brave but unfortunate Galgacus. This event completed the subjugation of Britain, which was thenceforward considered by the conqueror as a Roman province, and consequently admitted to a participation of all the immunities enjoyed by the allies of Rome.

The island was governed by Agricola with great moderation and prudence. He appointed officers of virtue and talents to preside over the different districts; was indefatigable in the reformation of abuses, and administration of justice according to the laws of Rome; and he contributed to the improvement of the Britons, by the institution of establishments for the education of youth. By this mild and equitable administration he conciliated the minds of the people, and this pacific disposition was still further promoted by the extensive promulgation of christianity in the island.

The Britons were also instructed by the Romans in the cultivation of the soil; an art hitherto much neglected by a people who preferred pastoral indolence to the active industry of the husbandman. But the numerous advantages and gratifications arising from successful agriculture soon rendered it popular, and improvements, not only in handicraft arts, but also in navigation gradually introduced that adventurous and enterprising spirit, which at this remote period of time is the foundation of the commerce, opulence, and glory of this island.

London, Bristol, and other sea-ports, gradually emerged from obscurity under the auspicious influence of Agricola ; but the subsequent commotions and final dismemberment of the Roman empire involved Britain, and its other dependencies, in similar ruin.

In the year 410, the Romans finally resigned their authority over Britain. But they previously exhausted the population by levies of troops for the defence of their dominions on the Continent, insomuch that the island was left almost defenceless.*

After the departure of the Romans, the people were left to choose their own rulers ; but this short enjoyment of peace and liberty, was interrupted by the incursions of the Picts and Scots, barbarians who inhabited the northern part of the island, and invaded their neighbours for the purposes of plunder and devastation.

Embassadors were deputed by the Britons to Rome, entreating aid against the Scots and Picts, and a legion was sent to assist in their repulsion. The Romans soon defeated those marauders, and having cleared the frontiers which divided those uncivilized banditti from the civilized Britons, they built a wall or rampire across the island, from sea to sea.†

But the barbarians soon broke down part of this wall, and again poured into the country like a torrent, spreading destruction around wheresoever they came. The Britons in their distress again sent ambassadors to Rome, imploring the aid of their former protectors ; and Valentinian III. then emperor,‡ sent another body of troops to their assistance. These auxiliaries soon drove the plunderers beyond their frontiers, and for the protection of the Britons, a wall

* Gildas.

† Sammes's Brit. Ant. Illus. p. 344.

‡ An. Dom. 418.

of stone was built twelve feet high and eight feet thick, which formed a strong barrier from Newcastle-on-Tyne to Solway-frith. They also built towers on the southern coast to prevent piratical invasions in that quarter.

Having thus fortified the frontiers of their British allies, the Romans exhorted them to defend themselves valiantly, as they could no longer afford them any assistance. The Romans then embarked for the Continent,* and soon after their departure the northern barbarians recommenced hostilities against the Britons, and by their savage and desperate valour, captured the frontier towns, and devastated the country.

A pathetic account of the misery of the people is recorded by our most ancient historian,† who informs us that the Britons, exhausted and dispirited by continual wars, sent deputies to Rome for assistance.‡ Their letters directed to Ætius, the president of Gallia, were to the following purport :

“ To Ætius, thrice consul, the groans of the Britons.—The barbarians drive us to the sea, and the sea drives us back to the barbarians ; so that between both we are reduced to the wretched alternative of being murdered or drowned.

“ We the poor remains of the Britons, besides the miseries of war, are afflicted with famine and mortality, which at this time depopulates our land.”

This supplicatory address obtained only an answer from Ætius, in which he informed the Britons that he could afford them no assistance, being then engaged in preparations for the repulsion of Attila, who with an army of eight hundred thousand Huns, had invaded Gaul. Thus left destitute, the dispirited Britons had before them the miserable prospect of famine or extermination ; for the Scots

* An. Dom. 423.

† Bede.

‡ An. Dom. 446.

and Picts in their frequent incursions, not only interrupted tillage, but drove off the flocks and herds, and destroyed the habitations of our ancestors.

But the immorality of the Britons at this period was a greater obstacle to their happiness, than even the inroads of the enemy. Their religion, if it deserved the name, consisted of an intermixture of Pagan errors with the truths of Christianity; the manners of the people were tinged with the grossness of their superstition; and their morals were debased by sensuality. The light of Revelation, which had shone on the inhabitants of the western part of Britain, and consequently those of Bristol, was eclipsed by the gloomy superstition of Paganism; and though numbers of the people were professors of Christianity, the enormity of their vices disproved the sincerity of their professions.

While the people in general were in this wretched state of depravity, without virtue, government, or laws; a few of the nobles held a convention, to devise some method of counteracting the evils of anarchy. At this meeting it was deemed expedient to nominate Vortigern King of the Dunmonii,* monarch of Britain. This decision met with the general concurrence of the people, who, harassed by the reiterated incursions of the northern barbarians, wished for a ruler whose abilities and valour might enable them to repel their enemies.

But Vortigern was incompetent to the performance of this important task; for instead of the wisdom, disinterestedness, and virtue which should form the character of a great monarch, his characteristics were cunning, treachery, and sensuality. The Scots and Picts continued their depredations in defiance of the feeble exertions of this British sovereign, who finding his resources inadequate to the continuance of the contest, convened an assembly of his nobles, at which he persuaded them to call in the aid of the Saxons, a warlike nation who inhabited the country near the coasts of the German Ocean.

* Inhabitants of Cornwall and Devonshire.

Accordingly ambassadors were sent to Wittigisil, general of the Saxons, who summoned a council of his principal officers to receive them. When introduced to the council, the senior ambassador of the Britons addressed them in the following words,

“ Illustrious and generous Saxons, the Britons, harassed by the incessant inroads of the Scots and Picts their neighbours, yet their enemies, have deputed us to implore your aid. The fame of your valour has reached our ears, we are sensible your arms are irresistible, and therefore come to intreat your protection. Britain for some ages made a considerable province of the Roman empire, but our protectors having abandoned us, we invite you to an alliance. Grant our request, and in return we offer all that a country rich and fertile, like ours, can afford.—We shall submit to whatever terms of recompense you shall judge reasonable, if as allies you afford us your assistance in the repulsion of the enemy out of our country.”*

To this address Wittigisil returned a concise but favourable answer. “ Be assured,” said he, “ that the Saxons will assist you in your pressing necessities.” The result of this conference was a treaty of alliance, in which the Saxons agreed to send the Britons an army of nine thousand auxiliaries, on condition, that the troops should be allowed a certain pay, and that they should be put in possession of the isle of Thanet for the establishment of a colony in Britain.

Prior to this embassy and alliance, Britain was not altogether unknown to the Saxons, who had made several piratical descents upon the eastern coast of the island, whence they had been repelled with so much vigour, that they considered the Britons a truly formidable race, till they themselves made a discovery of their weakness.

* Nennius.

The warlike people whom the Britons had thus engaged to become their assistants, were at this period celebrated on the continent for their valour. Their origin is unknown, though several antiquarians have favoured the world with ingenious conjectures on the subject. Mr. Camden is of opinion that they derived their name from the Sacæ of Asia, and this conjecture is corroborated by some runic verses descriptive of the Heaven of these idolaters. Thus translated by Sammes.

“ Methinks I long to end,

“ I hear the Dyser call ;

“ Which Woden here doth send

“ To bring me to his hall.

“ With ASIANS there in highest seat,

“ I merrily will quaff,

“ Past hours I care not to repeat,

“ But when I die I'll laugh.”*

The Saxons believed that after death they were to be admitted into Woden's† Hall, there to drink ale with him and his companions in the skulls of their enemies. They also imagined that a goddess named Dyser was employed by their god to convey the spirits of the valiant into his paradise.

When the Saxons were invited to the aid of the Britons, they were idolaters, the principal objects of their worship being the Sun, Moon, Tuisco, Woden, Thor, Friga, and Seater, from whom the days of the week were named.

According to Herodotus, their leagues were confirmed with human blood. Having put wine into an earthen vessel, they with a sword or knife made a gash in their bodies, then dipped the weapon into the cup, and after many invocations

* Sammes's *Britannia Antiqua Illustrata*, p. 436.

† Woden was the Saxon god of war.

to their idols, and imprecations against whoever should fail of this solemn engagement, they drank up the wine.*

The Saxons were naturally warlike. For courage of mind, strength of body, and indefatigable activity, they were the most renowned of the German nations.† They were dreadful to the Romans in consequence of their courage and agility.‡ They were tall, well proportioned, and handsome; wore their hair loose on their shoulders, and were clothed in long flowing garments of linen, embroidered with various colours. Their armour consisted of spears, swords, daggers and small shields. To their enemies they were cruel, especially prisoners of war, whom they sacrificed to their idols.§

According to their agreement with the British ambassadors, a considerable body of troops, under the command of Hengist and Horsa, the sons of Wittigisil, were sent from Saxony to this island. They landed in the isle of Thanet, where Vortigern, who stood on the shore ready to receive them, welcomed his allies with unfeigned joy.—The Saxons were joined by a small army of Britons, and marched against the Scots and Picts, who had penetrated into the country as far as Stamford in Lincolnshire.

At the first onset the Saxons, unappalled by the darts of the enemy, marched up to them with a firmness and discipline that terrified those plunderers, who had been accustomed to the feeble opposition of the ill-armed Britons. The total discomfiture of the northern barbarians in the first battle, was succeeded by a series of victories, obtained by the Saxons over them, that eventually compelled them to retire into their own barren and almost inaccessible regions.

When Hengist the Saxon general had thus expelled the enemies of the Britons, he requested permission to build a small fort for the protection of the northern

* Herodotus, lib. 4.

† Zosimus.

‡ Marcellinus.

§ Paulus Diaconus.

part of the country, and the accommodation of the troops who might be placed there as a garrison. Vortigern readily complied with his request, and granted him as much ground as he could surround with the hide of an ox, which being cut into small thongs, enclosed a space sufficient for the foundation of a fort, called Thong Castle.

The British nobles, however, were displeased at thus seeing a foreign power established in the very heart of their country, and Hengist perceiving their dissatisfaction, and apprehensive of treachery, immediately dispatched a messenger to Saxony with an account of his situation, requesting a powerful reinforcement of his countrymen.

These troops were accompanied by Escus, the eldest son of Hengist, and Rowena his niece, a young lady of consummate personal beauty and mental endowments, in honor of whose arrival the Saxon general prepared a splendid entertainment, to which King Vortigern was invited.

During the entertainment, the beauty and agreeable manners of Rowena, captivated the British prince, who demanded her in marriage of Hengist; but the wily Saxon replied, that he could not bestow his niece on a person who was not only already married, but also a Christian. Vortigern removed these obstacles by divorcing his wife, and consenting that Rowena should have the free exercise of her religion. Their marriage was afterwards solemnized with great pomp, contrary to the sentiments of the British nobles.

This matrimonial union established the Saxons in Britain, for Vortigern, soon afterwards, displaced Gorgonus, the governor of Kent, and invested Hengist and Horsa with the sovereignty of that province, giving them permission to people it with emigrants from Saxony.

The ambitious Hengist, however, resolved to extend his authority throughout Britain, and for that purpose obtained further reinforcements of warriors from time to time, insomuch that he at length was at the head of a powerful army, sufficient to repel any sudden attack of the Britons, who now looked upon him as a professed enemy. He also informed Vortigern, who continued his steadfast friend, that the Britons held a secret correspondence with Ambrosius, a prince descended from Roman ancestors, who was then at the court of Aldwen, King of Armorica or Brittany.

Vortigern, who now despaired of ever regaining the affections of his British subjects, and dreaded Ambrosius as a dangerous rival, applied for advice and assistance to Hengist, who told him that all the Saxons in Britain were at his devotion, and persuaded him to admit a greater number of soldiers from Saxony into Britain.

The British prince agreed to this proposal, and a fleet of forty ships, with a powerful reinforcement, under the command of Octa, landed in this island in the year 452. Hengist now openly complained that the Saxon soldiers had not been paid according to the original contract, and boldly demanded the arrears.

The Britons, exasperated at his conduct, resolved to repress the power of the Saxons, and Vortimer, the son of Vortigern, inspired with patriotic zeal, having entered into a secret confederacy with the principal British nobles, a successful insurrection against Vortigern compelled him to admit his son copartner with him in the government. The British nobles also entrusted the sole management of the public affairs to Vortimer, hence the power of his father was merely nominal and inefficient.

This revolution was the commencement of a sanguinary war between the Saxons and Britons, which ended in the subjugation of the latter; for although

Vortimer distinguished himself by his valour and wisdom both in the council and the field, his countrymen were driven to such extremities, that by the advice of Guithelin, archbishop of London, they sent ambassadors to the King of Armorica for aid. This application made way for the introduction of Ambrosius, who landed at Totness with ten thousand men; but his arrival only increased the miseries of the Britons by a civil war between his partizans and those of Vortimer.

Meanwhile the Saxons, profiting by the discord of the Britons, daily took firmer possession of Kent, and the country beyond the Humber. After a civil war of eight years, the kingdom was, by mutual agreement, divided between the contending princes; the British Kings Vortigern and Vortimer exercising their authority over the eastern, and Ambrosius over the western part of the kingdom; the highway called Watling-street being the boundary.

At the conclusion of this sanguinary civil war, Briton exhibited a deplorable scene of devastation. Whole districts were depopulated by the sword, tillage neglected, all manufactures and commerce suspended, except the fabrication of warlike instruments; and as a still further aggravation of internal misery, the coasts were insulted by the piratical Saxons, and the advantage of a commercial intercourse with foreign nations prevented by these desperate adventurers.

During this temporary state of public calamity, the sea-ports of Britain, particularly London and Bristol, were reduced to the verge of ruin.—The merchants were deprived of their property, which was seized under the name of contributions exacted by the predominant party; and the cheering influence of trade and plenty, was succeeded by penury and indolence.

A narrative of the battles and other memorable events in the history of Britain, during a period of one hundred and thirty years, which terminated in the conquest of the country by the Saxons, would be amusing; but the annalists

of those ages, as has already been observed, were monks, whose records principally consist of an account of the establishment of monasteries, and the immunities granted to the clergy.—Hence their annals are almost barren of information respecting the state of manners, trade and commerce; and even the actions of those princes recorded by them, are merely mentioned as having a reference to some ecclesiastical endowment.

One hero has, however, engaged their attention, Arthur, the illustrious defender of his country's liberties, is spoken of even by monks with enthusiastic admiration. This British hero made his first campaign under his father, Uter Pendragon, in 466, when he was only fourteen years of age, and even then distinguished himself by a heroism which re-animated the hopes of his countrymen.

In the year 508, Arthur was elected Monarch of Britain, after a series of victories over the Saxons, which completely repressed their encroachments. They still, however, kept possession of Hampshire and Somersetshire, which were granted by Arthur to Cerdic the Saxon general, after the battle of Badon Hill. Cerdic was the founder of the kingdom of Wessex.

During this interval of peace, Arthur rebuilt several churches which had been destroyed by the Saxons, and after a glorious reign, he was mortally wounded in a battle with the Picts, and was interred in the church-yard of Glastonbury.

After the death of Arthur, multitudes of the Angles, a people who inhabited the country contiguous to Saxony, emigrated into Britain, to the aid of the Saxons, who with such powerful auxiliaries, at length succeeded in the total conquest of the country. Having obtained complete possession of the fertile part of Britain, and all its celebrated cities, particularly London, York, and

Bristol, the Saxons gradually established the heptarchy, or seven kingdoms into which that part of the island now known by the name of England, was divided.

The Britons, as a last refuge, retreated across the Severn into Cambria, where they were secured from the fury of the invader by inaccessible morasses and mountains. Wretched indeed was the state of the Britons before they tried this last resource; for when the Saxons became masters of the country they were Pagans, and they persecuted the British Christians with unrelenting cruelty.

“ From the east to the west nothing was to be seen but churches burnt and destroyed to their very foundations. The inhabitants were extirpated by the sword, and buried under the ruins of their own houses; and the altars were daily profaned by the blood of Christians who, during their devotions, were slain on them by their merciless persecutors.”*

Bede, who was himself of Saxon origin, and consequently not disposed to exaggerate the cruelties of his countrymen, imputes the persecution of the British Christians to the judgment of Heaven upon their crimes.

“ By the hands of the Saxons, a fire was lighted up in Britain, that served to put in execution the just vengeance of God against the wicked Britons, as he had formerly burnt Jerusalem by the Chaldeans. The island was so ravaged by the conquerors, or rather by the hand of God making use of them as instruments, that there seemed to be a continued flame from sea to sea, which burnt up the cities, and covered the surface of the whole isle. Public and private buildings fell in one common ruin. The priests were

* Gildas.

murdered on the altars : the bishop with his flock perished by fire and sword, without any distinction, no one daring to give their scattered corpses an honorable burial.”*

About the close of the sixth century, the Anglo-Saxons in Kent were converted to Christianity by Augustine, a Benedictine Monk, and in the course of fifty years afterwards the gospel was promulgated throughout the heptarchy. At this period Birinus revived the Christian religion among the West Saxons, where all recollection of its doctrines had been extinguished by the persecution of the Saxon Pagans.

The origin of the revival of Christianity in Britain, is recorded by Bede, a priest of Northumberland, who flourished at the commencement of the eighth century. His authority was indeed chiefly traditional ; but the written documents of Pope Gregory authenticate the account given by our first British historian,

“ According to report, on a certain day when merchants lately arrived brought a variety of goods into the market-place at Rome, for to be sold, and many chapmen came to buy, Gregory himself came thither, and beheld among other things, a number of boys exposed to sale. Their bodies were well proportioned, their complexions fair, their hair beautiful, and their countenances sweet and amiable. While Gregory wistfully beheld these boys, he demanded from what country they were brought ; and was answered by the merchant that they came out of the isle of Britain, where the people in general were as well favoured as they. He then enquired whether those islanders were Christians, or ensnared still with the errors of Paganism ; and the reply was, that they were Painims, on which he sighed deeply, exclaiming, ‘ Alas what a pity that the father of darkness should be lord of such bright and beauteous faces,

* Bede

and that they who are so graceful in their persons, should be destitute of inward grace.' Continuing his enquiries, he desired to know by what name their nation was known. The merchant made answer that they were called Angli; "and well may they be so named," replied he, "for angel-like faces they have, and meet it is that they should be coheirs with angels in heaven."—"But what is the name of the king of the province from whence these youths were brought?" "His name is Aelle," replied the merchant. Then Gregory, in allusion to the name of that prince, said, "that Allelujah should be sung in that province to the praise of God the Creator."

Inspired with a sacred enthusiasm for the promulgation of Christianity among those Pagans, Gregory entreated permission of Pope Benedict, to go and preach the gospel in Britain. The Pope readily consented, and the missionary prepared for his departure, but was persuaded by the entreaties of the people of Rome to defer his voyage.

Gregory, however, still looked forward to the performance of his plan of conversion, and after the death of Boniface being chosen successor to that Pontiff, he appointed Augustine, his chief instrument, in this important work.

Augustine, who was by birth a Roman, and celebrated for his sanctitude, was sent into Britain by Gregory, in the year 596, with forty monks, and several of the inferior clergy, as assistants. In 597, Augustine converted Ethelbert, King of Kent, and the greatest part of his people, whom on the day of Pentecost he baptized in the church of St. Martin, at Canterbury. The same year he went to Arles in Gaul, where he was by the command of Gregory ordained archbishop of the English, by Ethurius, metropolitan of that city.

On his return to England, Augustine was received by Ethelred, Bertha his Queen, and the people in general with every demonstration of joy and respect.

Soon after his ordination, he sent messengers to Gregory, with an account of the government of the church which he had established among the Saxons, and as a reward for his zeal and success, he was in the year 601, honoured by that Pontiff with the pall,* or in other words nominated metropolitan of Britain.

Augustine is extolled by Bede, and other eminent writers, for his learning and piety; they also praise the apostle of the English for his abstinence, prayers, alms, zeal in the promulgation of Christianity, and earnestness in his endeavours to exterminate Paganism. He is represented as the first introducer of Monks into England, praised for his activity in founding churches, and said to have been endued with the power of working miracles, but accused of pride, against which he was admonished in the following epistle from Pope Gregory himself.

Gregory to Augustine, Bishop of the English.

“ Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men, because a grain of corn falling dead upon the earth hath brought forth much fruit, that it might not alone reign in heaven, by whose death we live, by whose infirmity we are strengthened, by whose passion we are delivered from passion, by whose love we sought brethren in Britain whom we knew not, and by whose courtesy, whom not knowing we sought, we have found. Who

* The pall is a piece of fine white woollen cloth, about two inches broad, fastened at the ends, and thrown over the shoulders. To this are fastened two similar pieces, one of which is placed on the breast, and the other on the back, each adorned with a red cross. The upper part of the pall is also ornamented with several smaller crosses of the same colour. The pall is first placed upon St. Peter's tomb by the Pope, and then sent to the respective metropolitans as the badge of their authority. At the delivery of it they swear fealty to the Pope. The ancient pall, from the Latin *Pallium*, was an entire and magnificent habit, designed to remind the Bishop that his actions should correspond with the dignity of his appearance. Pet. de Marca.

is able to relate how great the joy is that is arisen in the hearts of the faithful, that through the grace of Almighty God co-operating, and your brotherhood labouring, the darkness of error being driven away, the English nation is covered over with the glorious light of holy faith, that now, out of a sincere mind and pious devotion, it tramples on those idols to which before it blindly crouched, that it prostrates itself before God with a pure heart, that it is restrained from relapsing into sin by the rules and instructions of holy preaching, that it submits in mind to the Divine precepts, but raised in understanding, humbles itself in prayer on the ground, lest in affections it should grovel in the earth? Who, that he might make it manifest to the world that he converts not by wisdom of men, but by his own virtue and power, the preachers he sent into the world he made choice of without learning, using the same method here also, for in the English nation he has wrought mighty things by the hands of weak persons.”*

The promulgation of this benign religion gradually humanized the manners and purified the morals of the Anglo-Saxons. It was zealously promoted in Wessex by King Ina, who began his reign in the year 694. This great prince, who was celebrated as a hero, a legislator, and a devout Christian, rebuilt Glastonbury Abbey on a magnificent plan, and augmented the revenues of that royal establishment, insomuch that it became one of the most considerable Abbies in England. His code of laws, entitled West-Saxon-leaga, was afterwards improved and amplified by Alfred.†

* Gregorian Register, lib. 9.

† Among the laws of King Ina, the following are particularly curious and illustrative of the manners of the age in which they were established.

Ina, by the grace of God, King of the West-Saxons, by the advice and institution of Cenred my father, and Heddes and Erkenwald my bishops, with all my aldermen and sage ancients of my people, in a great assembly of the servants of God, have religiously endeavoured, both for the health of our soul, and the common preservation of our kingdom, that right laws and true judgment be founded and established throughout our whole

In the year 727, Ina went to Rome, and with the concurrence of Pope Gregory the second, founded a college for the reception and instruction

dominions, and that it shall not be lawful for the time to come, for any alderman, or other person whatever, to abolish these our constitutions.

OF GOD'S MINISTERS.

In the first place, we command that the ministers of God keep and observe the appointed rule of living; and next, we will, that amongst all our people these laws and judgments be observed.

OF INFANTS.

A child shall be baptized within thirty days after it is born, if not, the neglect shall be punished 30s.*

OF WORKING ON SUNDAY.

If a servant do any work on Sunday by command of his master, he shall be free, and the master shall pay thirty shillings; but if he went about the work without command from his master, he shall be beaten with stripes, or redeem the penalty of whipping with a price. A freeman, if he work on this day without command of his master, shall lose his freedom, or pay sixty shillings: if he be a priest, his penalty shall be double.

OF THE PRIVILEGE OF A TEMPLE.

If any one guilty of a capital crime shall take refuge in a church, he shall save his life, and make recompense according to justice and equity; if one deserving stripes take sanctuary, he shall have the stripes forgiven him.

OF QUARRELS.

If any one fight within the King's court, he shall forfeit all his goods and chattels, and it shall be at the will and pleasure of the King, whether he be not to lose his life also. He that fights in a cathedral church shall pay 120s.; in the house of an alderman, or another sage noblemen, 60s. Whosoever shall fight in a villager's house paying scot, or any yeoman's, shall be punished 30s. and shall give the villager 6s. And if any one fight in the open field, he shall pay 120s. If there happen among guests a quarrel, and some of them shall patiently take ill language, the rest shall be punished 30s. a piece.

OF THEFT.

If any one shall steal without the privity of his wife and children, he shall be punished 60s. But if he steal, his whole family consenting, they shall be given into servitude. A child of ten years old shall be accounted accessory in theft.

OF CLAIMING JUSTICE.

If any plaintiff shall require right to be done him by a judge, and the defendant give no pledge, the judge shall forfeit 30s. and nevertheless within a seven-night do him true justice.

OF SELF-VINDICATION.

He that on his own private account shall take satisfaction for a wrong done to him, before he hath demanded public justice, shall restore what he took away on that account, or give the worth of the thing, and besides forfeit 30s.

* A Saxon Shilling was of the value of five-pence sterling.

of all Britons who should come to that city to study divinity. He also built a church contiguous to the college, and appointed a certain number of priests to officiate in it, for whose maintenance he levied a tax of a penny on every family in the kingdoms of Wessex and Sussex. This money was sent annually to Rome, under the name of Rome-scot, afterwards termed Peter-pence.*

After a glorious reign of thirty-nine years, Ina resigned his crown to

OF RAPINE.

If any shall rob within the confines of our state, he shall restore what he hath taken, and be punished 60s.

OF MEN-BUYERS.

If any one shall buy his countryman, either bond or free, or guilty of a crime, and send him beyond sea, he shall pay the value of his head, and give over and above sufficient satisfaction.

OF FALSE WITNESS.

If any before a bishop give false witness or pledge, he shall be amerced 120s.

OF ROBBERS TAKEN.

If a robber be taken, he shall lose his life, or redeem it according to the estimation of his head. We call robbers to the number of seven men, and from seven to thirty-five a band; all above an army.

OF A THIEF SLAYER.

He that shall slay a thief, shall make oath he slew him for his theft only; but nevertheless he shall not be exempted from all payment to his friends.

OF A KING'S VILLAIN.

A King's villain's oath is valued at sixty hides of land; and if he be a housekeeper, the estimation of his head is twelve hundred shillings.

OF AN INFANT EXPOSED.

For the breeding up an infant exposed, the first year shall be given 6s.; the second year 12s.; the third year 30s.; and afterwards according to his worth.

OF HIM THAT SHALL BUY A WOMAN.

If any one buy a woman, and performeth not the bargain, he shall give the money itself, and pay as much more, and nevertheless suffer such penalties as if he had violated his security.

OF A BOOR THAT POSSESSETH LAND.

A Welchman that holdeth a whole hyde of land shall be valued at 120s. his head; if he hath but half a hyde, at 80s.; if none at all, 60s.

* William of Malmsbury, l. 1. c. 1.

Adeland his kinsman, and retired into a monastery, a kind of self-denial and devotion held in the highest estimation by his cotemporaries.

In the year 800, King Egbert began his reign over the West Saxons, and after a series of conflicts and victories, he obtained the sovereignty of the heptarchy, which by his edict issued in the year 829, were united under the common appellation of England.*

This warlike prince was scarcely established in his sovereign power, when England was invaded by a host of northern pirates, known by the general name of Danes, who landed at Charmouth in Dorsetshire, in the year 833.

Egbert marched against the invaders with an army hastily collected, and attacked them near the sea-shore, but was defeated and compelled to retreat with precipitation, being so closely pursued, that he was indebted to the friendly shades of night for the preservation of his life. The victors having plundered the country adjacent to the coast, reimbarked with their spoils.

The Danes, who subsisted chiefly by piracy and plunder, thus began a contest with the English, which was reiterated for ages, and at length terminated in the establishment of a Danish monarch on the English throne. Those northern barbarians were Pagans, and their idolatry rendered them more sanguinary against the English, who were Christians. Hence the predatory warfare of the pirates was attended with wanton devastations; whatever they could not carry off, they

* It is probable that Egbert only revived or confirmed the name of England, for we find in Bede's ecclesiastical history, that the three nations settled in Great Britain were called Angli or English. Bede wrote 150 years before the reign of King Egbert; and Ina, in his laws enacted for the West Saxons, stiles them Englishmen. "If an Englishman," says he, "commits theft." "If a Welch slave shall kill an Englishman," &c. Brampton's Leges Inæ. l. 26. lex. 78.

destroyed with fire, and the coasts most favourable to their descent, especially those of Northumberland, were desolated.

An outrage fatal in its consequences to the tranquillity of England, proved favourable to the ambitious projects of the Danes. Osbert, King of Northumberland, on his return from hunting stopped at the house of Bruern Brocard, a nobleman who in consequence of his abilities was appointed guardian of the coasts against the descents of the Danes. Bruern was absent, engaged in the duties of his important office, and his lady, a woman of uncommon beauty and accomplishments, entertained her royal visitor, who, enchanted with her attractions, under pretence of communicating a secret of great importance to her husband, led her to a remote apartment, and solicited her compliance with his amorous desires. The lady rejected the suit of Osbert with all the dignity of offended virtue, but that brutal prince having recourse to force, left the victim of his inordinate passion in a state of dishonour and affliction.

Buern, on his return home, was made acquainted with this infamous outrage, and incited by revenge, thenceforward exerted all his influence against the ravisher. The people, exasperated at the wrongs of Bruern, revolted, and proclaimed Ella King of Northumberland. A civil war ensued, which deprived Osbert of one half of his dominions; but the injured honour of Bruern was unappeasable, and he resolved to apply for foreign redress.

Accordingly he made a voyage to Denmark, disclosed his wrongs to King Ivar, and intreated his aid. The ambition of the Danish prince eagerly embraced an enterprize which promised so much fame and emolument. In the ensuing spring he entered the Humber with a large fleet, landed a formidable army, which spread terror throughout England, and in two battles conquered both Osbert and Ella, and took possession of Northumberland. The victor afterwards penetrated into the country as far as Nottingham, where Buthred King of Mercia, and

Ethelred King of Wessex, were ready with their united forces to oppose him; but Ivar thought it expedient to retreat into his newly acquired territories without hazarding a battle.

In their progress through England the idolatrous Danes committed terrible ravages, and destroyed the churches and monasteries wherever they came. The Abbess of Coldingham, on the approach of this barbarous enemy, persuaded the nuns to disfigure themselves, by cutting off their noses and upper lips, for the preservation of their chastity; but the Danish soldiers were so much exasperated at the appearance of these victims of virtue, that they set fire to the nunnery, and destroyed the whole sisterhood in the flames.

Ivar on his return to Northumberland, resolved on the conquest of the eastern provinces of England, and embarking a chosen body of troops, he sailed along the coast, and made a descent upon East Anglia, which submitted to him, after a decisive battle. This success inspired Ivar with ambition to complete the conquest of England. Accordingly he sailed for the coast of Wessex with a powerful army, landed his troops, and advanced as far as Reading, where he was met by Ethelred, King of Wessex, who, accompanied by Alfred his brother, had marched to oppose the invader.

In the course of the campaign, nine pitched battles were fought with various success, victory sometimes declaring for one competitor, and sometimes for another, Alfred distinguished himself for his valour and presence of mind throughout this arduous and important contest; and when his brother Ethelred received a mortal wound in the ninth battle, the youthful hero was appointed his successor. This illustrious prince ascended the throne of his ancestors in the year 872, when the enemy had obtained a footing in the very heart of his kingdom.

During an almost uninterrupted contest of fourteen years with the Danish settlers in England, who were aided by powerful armies of their countrymen

which invaded the kingdom at different points, Alfred was at length reduced to the necessity of disbanding his small army, and seeking refuge wherever Providence should direct his steps. The Isle of Athelney afforded an asylum to this illustrious fugitive; and while numbers of the dispirited English crossed the Severn to seek shelter in the woody and mountainous regions of South Wales, several of the principal nobles, and their brave and patriotic adherents, concealed themselves in various parts of Wessex, particularly Selwood Forest.

A cavern discovered about forty years ago on the south-west bank of the Avon, near Bristol, was probably one of the hiding places of those true patriots, who still looked forward to the moment when they might be instrumental to the emancipation of their country.

The situation of this subterraneous retreat was favourable to the security of the refugees, for several reasons. Bristol, rendered almost uninhabitable by the ravages of Danish plunderers, was at this period abandoned by its inhabitants; and as the victors had nothing to apprehend from the maritime armaments of the English, they probably plundered the city, and afterwards reduced it to ruins.

Hence Bristol became desolate; the cheerful sounds of population were no longer heard in the streets, which presented nothing but a general scene of ruin and dilapidation. The country in its vicinity was in many places overgrown with wood, particularly the hills above the cavern; and all these circumstances rendered that retreat at once secluded and secure. At the same time it was an advantageous situation, which enabled the refugees to hold a communication by water with the inhabitants of South Wales, and those of the western extremity of the island.

From the extent of the cavern it was sufficiently capacious to contain some thousands of troops; and the following description from actual observation,

may enable the antiquary to account for this extraordinary and extensive excavation.

The entrance from the river-side is evidently of modern masonry, and was probably made when the cavern was discovered in the year 1768 ; but the excavations have every appearance of great antiquity. A passage of a few yards leads to a kind of apartment from which two branches extend to a distance that has not yet been fully explored. The roof of the cavern is in general about five feet high, composed of solid rock, and supported by rude square columns rising on each side in the form of an arch. The rock is reddish, similar to that from which the parish of Redcliff takes its name, and the excavation must have been made with great labour. It was probably hewn out with hatchets or bills, the traces of which are visible on the roof and pillars.

Fissures are perceptible in different parts of the roof; they were probably made for the admission of air, which in general is sufficiently pure for the support of animal life. The two branches extending from the mouth of the cavern appear afterwards to unite, and several of the inferior branches terminate in a kind of recess. A straight passage of several yards in length, and sufficiently broad for two persons to pass, leads to an irregular area, the roof of which is at least seven feet high, and the space sufficient to contain fifty men. On proceeding along the principal passage, another more capacious apartment, but with a lower roof, presents itself, and several still lower apertures or excavations, leading to different parts of the cavern, at once tend to bewilder the visitor, and amuse his imagination, by their singular appearance. They are so deeply involved in darkness, that it would require several lights to illumine the place. The floor in general is irregular, and in some places damp, so that the cavern at best must have been a most uncomfortable habitation ; a place of refuge which nothing but the hope of preserving life, and regaining of liberty, could have rendered tolerable even to the most resolute individual.

How the refugees of this subterraneous habitation were supplied with food, is now unknown. Probably alternate parties issued from their hiding place, and collected flocks and herds for subsistence; a small supply of fish might also have been obtained. It is not improbable that King Alfred himself occasionally sought refuge in this retreat; for it is recorded "that he was constreyned for a time to kepe himself close within the fennes and marrisse groundes of Somersetshire with such small companies as he had aboute him."*

After having experienced a variety of remarkable vicissitudes, which shall be related in his biography, King Alfred was eventually victorious over the enemies of his country. In the year 887, he equipped a fleet, rebuilt the dismantled castles on the sea-shore, and built several new fortresses, among which was the castle of Bristol.

The remains of a chapel yet to be seen in a house and warehouse in Tower-street, Bristol, are probably of Saxon origin. The low roof arched with stone, and the rude pilasters, were doubtless erected before the invasion of the Norman conqueror; and we may venture with the eye of retrospection to view the great and pious Alfred himself assisting at the consecration of this chapel.

Alfred was crowned in the year 871, and in 887 he began to fortify several towns for the security of the inhabitants, and the protection of commerce, which under his benignant auspices, began to flourish in England. Among the sea-ports Bristol was conspicuous. Indeed its situation, as a frontier town on the banks of a navigable river, gave it a decided superiority over every other sea-port in Wessex, a province in which Alfred experienced his most remarkable vicissitudes, and to which he was naturally attached as his hereditary dominion. Bristol, therefore, was not neglected by a sovereign, who afforded every

* Hollinshead, p. 214.

encouragement to incite the enterprize of the mariner and the merchant; and were we in possession of records respecting the eventful and important epoch in which a hero and philosopher dispensed the choicest blessings of civilization to his countrymen, we should be enabled to authenticate the fact, that Bristol was then a prosperous commercial city, inferior only to London itself in foreign and domestic traffick.

That he first built the castle of Bristol for the protection of this sea-port against a foreign enemy, can no longer be doubted, if we recur to the improvements made during his reign; nay, it is probable that he enlarged and adorned the city itself, at the same period of time that he built other towns. It must doubtless be a refined gratification to the present inhabitants of this ancient city, to know that a fortress was built for the protection of their ancestors, by a prince renowned for every civic and every social virtue; and that Bristol, which has been so often honored with the presence of kings, and other illustrious personages, derives an additional claim to antiquity and splendour, from its having been favoured with the munificence, and protected by the genius of the immortal Alfred.

Blest, Alfred, be thy honour'd name!
A people's voice of praise is sweet,
And sweet the songs his ear that greet,
The prince whose bosom glows with freedom's flame.

See Britain rising from her seat,
Proud of her rights and equal laws,
Ardent in freedom's sacred cause,
She form'd thee *wise*, and has proclaim'd thee *great*.

When the valour and wisdom of Alfred re-established the peace and liberty of his countrymen, he introduced improvements in several arts and manufactures, particularly ship-building, agriculture, architecture, and the fabrication of linen

and woollen cloths. Under his patronage the useful arts flourished; the Anglo-Saxons became skilful in the manufacture of flax and wool, which they dyed of various colours. The perfection to which they brought the arts of spinning, dying, and weaving, will receive some illustration from the following simile of a Saxon author.* “It is not the web of one uniform colour and texture, without any variety of figures, that pleases the eye, and appears beautiful; but one that is woven by shuttles, filled with threads of purple and various other colours, flying from side to side, and forming a variety of figures and images, in different compartments with admirable art.”

The traces and remains of mines and potteries yet discoverable in several places in the vicinity of Berkeley, Sodbury, Bath, and Bristol, afford proofs that considerable manufactures of iron, and earthen-ware, exercised the industry and ingenuity of the Anglo-Saxons, and contributed essentially to the commercial prosperity of *Caer Bristou*, recorded by two of our historians to have been a flourishing sea-port at this auspicious era.†

Bristol certainly was a place of considerable importance during the reign of Alfred, and his successor; for we are informed by an antiquarian, “that about the year 900, Aylward, a valiant Saxon nobleman, related to Edward the elder, was lord of Brightstowe, and founder of the monastery of Cranbourne.‡”

Having thus from a variety of documents authenticated the fact that Alfred was an active patron of Bristol, and that the city rapidly increased in commerce, opulence, and population, under his protection, a biographical sketch of his eventful life will probably afford new gratification to the present descendants of those citizens, who, gladdened by his presence, and encouraged by his example, cultivated those useful and elegant arts which adorn human nature.

* Aldhelm Bishop of Sherborn.

† Gildas and Ninnius.

‡ Leland.

THE LIFE OF ALFRED, KING OF ENGLAND.

"Wouldst thou gain thy Country's loud applause,

"Be thou the bold assertor of her cause ;

"Her voice in council, in the fight her sword.

"In peace, in war, pursue thy Country's good,

"For her bare thy bold breast, and pour thy generous blood."

CHOICE OF HERCULES.

Alfred, the fourth son of Ethelwulph,* king of Wessex, was born at Wantage,† in Berkshire, A. D. 848. His father was a prince remarkable for piety, and his veneration for the Pope induced him to send Alfred to Rome, in the fifth year of his age, to receive the pontifical benediction.

Pope Leo IV. not only received the young prince with cordiality, and a prompt compliance with his father's request, but also conferred on him the royal unction, from an anticipation that he should be exalted to regal dignity.‡ On his return to England he resided at Wantage, which was then a royal villa, where Ethelwulph held his court.

Few particulars respecting the juvenile amusements or pursuits of Alfred, have reached posterity. The public records were then entirely entrusted to the monks, who were the only historians of those ages, which have been justly and emphatically termed dark ; whatever had a tendency to establish the clerical authority over an ignorant and uncivilized laity, was recorded with care ; but the more interesting facts relative to characters, manners, arts, and sciences, were thought unworthy of notice, by those superstitious and illiterate annalists.

* Ethelwulph, soon after he ascended the throne, married the beautiful Osburga, his butler's daughter, a queen who had the happiness to be the mother of Alfred the Great.....HOLLINSHEAD.

† Wanating, or Wantage, was then a royal manor.

‡ Asserius.

When Alfred was twelve years of age, he accidentally turned his attention to literature. One day, in the presence of his mother, Osburga, he happened to open a little book belonging to the queen, and being much delighted with its ornaments, which consisted of capital letters in gold, and a variety of brilliant colours, he expressed an earnest wish to become the possessor. At this time he was ignorant of letters; and his mother, who was capable of giving him instruction, promised to give him the book, on condition that he should commit the contents to memory. Alfred undertook the task with such assiduity and success, that he soon read, and repeated the task to his mother; and from this incident his love of learning increased, insomuch that he became one of the most accomplished scholars of the age.

His principal attention in his youth seems to have been devoted alternately to literature and those martial exercises which were indispensable in an age, when valour was considered the principal virtue. Nor does it appear that the cultivation of his intellect diminished his natural intrepidity, which a series of wonderful vicissitudes afterwards proved to be equal to that of the most renowned heroes of Greece or Rome. Alfred was endowed with a combination of extraordinary talents, which were afterwards matured by adversity, and experience; and a candid investigation of his character will prove, that he was, in the extremes of adversity and prosperity, one of the most remarkable men that ever existed.

It is a singular fact, that his three brethren who swayed the sceptre of Wessex in succession, died in the course of sixteen years. Ethelred, indeed, fell in the field of battle, covered with glory; and Alfred, his successor, was crowned in the twenty-third year of his age.

The accession of Alfred to the throne of his ancestors, was considered by his subjects as an auspicious circumstance. They had already, on many important occasions, been witnesses to his valour and prudence. When he came

to the crown, the Danes had penetrated into the very centre of the kingdom, and were in possession of several of the sea-ports, particularly Exeter and Bristol. Those terrible and barbarous marauders, who lived entirely by piracy and plunder, spread devastation wherever they came; and Alfred, in less than a month after his coronation, was obliged to march against them, at the head of an army hastily embodied.

The Danes, who had advanced as far as Wilton, were attacked by the West-Saxons, who, notwithstanding the courage and skill of their leader, were, after a desperate conflict, compelled to retreat before the victorious invaders. Undismayed by this defeat, Alfred again led his men against the Danes, who, astonished at his intrepidity, and ignorant of his resources, sued for peace. They offered to march out of his dominions, on condition that he would not pursue them to any other part of England. He complied with the terms; and without delay, increased his military force, for the protection of the state against future invasion.

This precaution was indispensable, for the Danes, who were Pagans, disregarded the performance of their engagements, and were equally perfidious, treacherous, and cruel. They ravaged the other provinces of England, having made themselves masters of Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumberland; and Hubba, their general, a man of inordinate ambition, again prepared to attempt the conquest of Wessex, which then contained the other four kingdoms that formerly composed the Heptarchy. But the known valour of Alfred and his subjects, induced Hubba to defer his project. His people now began to cultivate the lands of which they had taken possession, and the inhabitants of Wessex enjoyed a temporary tranquillity under the government of their benignant sovereign.

Halfden, another Danish adventurer, however, landed in East Anglia, in the year 875, and advancing into Wessex, took Warham Castle, in Dorsetshire, by surprize. Alfred, who, in consequence of his treaty with Hubba, thought himself

secure from the depredations of the Danes, was not sufficiently prepared for the repulsion of this new invader, and endeavoured to avert the miseries of war from his people by a treaty with Halfden, who ratified his agreement by an oath, that he would never again set foot in Wessex.*

But this perfidious warrior, regardless of his oath, on his march towards Mercia attacked a body of English cavalry, slew the men, and mounting part of his own troops on the horses, marched to Exeter, which he immediately besieged.

When the news of this transaction reached Alfred, he convened a general assembly of his nobles, and exhorted them to unanimity and resolution, in defence of their country, against Pagans, who were regardless of all laws, human and divine.

“ Let us, my countrymen,” said the magnanimous prince, “ sacrifice every private consideration to the public weal. This is the trying moment, in which we must be decisive, if we hope to preserve our country from spoliation, our women from dishonour, ourselves from ignominy, and our posterity from vassalage to Pagan barbarians. There is no reliance to be placed on the oaths or contracts of those lawless banditti; for if we enter into an amicable treaty with the present invader, another host of desperadoes, unacquainted with the promised amity of their countrymen, will pour in upon us from the northern regions, and commence a new career of devastation. It remains for us then, my friends, to rouse our native valour. Animated in the cause of our homes, our altars, and all that can render life honourable or dear, let us repel in the field those ferocious savages, who delight in destruction. Though unequal in number, we are superior in courage, and Heaven will doubtless prosper our efforts, in defence of the liberties of our country.”

* The most solemn manner of swearing among the Danes, and other northern nations, was by their arms.

This exhortation excited a generous sentiment of patriotism: an army was levied by the nobles, and Alfred led them against the Danes. He engaged the enemy seven times in one campaign, without being able to give them a compleat overthrow. Consequently he was once more necessitated to enter into another treaty with Halfden, who agreed to quit the territories of Alfred, and return no more.

But although this army of Danes, from a conviction of the military prowess of Alfred, thought it expedient to perform their engagement, another host, under the command of Rollo, poured in upon the coast of Wessex. Fortunately Alfred was yet in the field, and he immediately marched to repel this new enemy. He was successful, and Rollo, disconcerted at this sudden repulse, reembarked his troops, and made a descent on the Continent, where he afterwards became so famous as a conqueror, that he was styled the scourge of France.

The reiterated invasions of the Danes, which kept England in continual alarm, induced Alfred to devise means for their effectual repulsion. His inventive genius, in an auspicious moment for the liberty of England, suggested the equipment of a fleet, by which he should be enabled effectually to resist the enemy on an element, where they had hitherto roved with unlimited power. He soon realized his project, by inventing a galley wrought with oars, and of such a size and construction, as rendered it an overmatch for any Danish vessel. The ships of the Danes were merely transports, fit only for the conveyance of troops, stores, or merchandise; but the gallies of Alfred, of which he soon equipped one hundred, were strong, and built purposely for war. Thus Alfred first taught Britons to repel the invader from their shores, and by a mode of warfare for which their insular situation was peculiarly favourable, they eventually prevailed, insomuch that at this moment their descendants are in possession of the empire of the ocean.

This first English fleet was sent on a cruise, and falling in with six Danish vessels, captured the largest of them, filled with soldiers, who were immediately thrown overboard,—an historic fact, which affords a striking proof of the ferocity of warfare in those ages, and the hatred which our ancestors harboured against those invaders of their country.

Soon afterwards, one hundred and twenty sail of Danish transports, on approaching the western coast of England to land their troops, were attacked by King Alfred's galleys with such resolution and effect, that the greater part of them was sunk, and the rest dispersed. This important naval victory was obtained by the English, in the year 876, and the next year another Danish fleet was wrecked on the coast of Wessex.

Encouraged by those favourable circumstances, Alfred marched to besiege Exeter, which was then a fortified town, occupied by a Danish garrison. The Danes were compelled to capitulate, to give the conqueror hostages, and entirely evacuate Wessex.

But the Danes were still in possession of three of the ancient kingdoms of the heptarchy; and invited by the fertility of Wessex, they entered into a secret combination to invade that kingdom, which had hitherto successfully resisted their attacks. Having concentrated all their forces, they marched towards Wessex, before Alfred could possibly put himself in a posture of defence. They penetrated into the kingdom, besieged Chippenham, a strong town which they soon stormed, and putting all the inhabitants to the sword, proceeded in their victorious career without further opposition.

At this calamitous juncture, the West Saxons seemed bereft of their natural courage, and fled before the terrible invader. Numbers of them crossed the Severn, and sought an asylum in Wales; others betook themselves to their

gallies, and put to sea; while the remainder submitted to the dominion of their conquerors.

All the sea-ports in the kingdom were now occupied by the Danes, and among others Bristol, which had been voluntarily abandoned by as many of the inhabitants as could put to sea, or seek refuge in Cambria: consequently, whatever property remained became the prize of the victorious barbarians, who with heathenish malignity, destroyed all places consecrated to religion, which had been erected in the city.

During this scene of public distress, Alfred was forsaken by all his terrified adherents, except a few of his own household servants, who, from motives of duty and affection, continued their attendance. But their sovereign, after giving them advice suitable to their circumstances, dismissed them, and alone sought a place of security from the enemy.

While he wandered along the bank of the Thone, he came to the confluence of that river with the Parret, where a small river island engaged his attention. The spot was remote from all appearance of human habitations, but he observed that a narrow foot-path led through a morass to the isle, which appeared overgrown with alders, thorns, and briers. The king proceeded cautiously along the quaking path, and on entering the isle, discovered a cottage, inhabited by a neatherd and his wife. Here concealed alike from friends and enemies, the royal guest met a hospitable reception, and was occasionally employed by his hostess about her household affairs. Of this fact there is an anecdote on record.

“ Having one day placed a cake upon the coals, with directions to the king to turn it, while she was busied with something else, Alfred, whose mind was probably engaged in some project for the emancipation of his countrymen,

neglected his charge. The cake was burnt, and his hostess chid him severely, telling him that "though he would not take the trouble to turn the cake, he could eat it fast enough."*

While Alfred thus continued in a state of seclusion from the world, an unexpected event revived the hopes of the West Saxons. Hubba, the Danish general, invaded Wales, which he devastated with fire and sword. He afterwards sailed along the coast of Devonshire, where he landed, and continued his desolating progress. The Earl of Devon, with a troop of brave followers, retired into Kinwith Castle, to avoid the fury of the Danes; it was immediately besieged, and the garrison came to the desperate resolution of opening a passage with their swords through the ranks of the enemy. Their leader, whose eloquence had persuaded them to make this noble effort, sallied forth sword in hand, and, supported by his gallant followers, attacked the Danes with such impetuosity, that he threw them into disorder. The West Saxons, animated by this success, continued to press the enemy, without giving them time to recover from their surprize, and defeated them with great slaughter. Hubba was slain, and the famous Danish standard, the *Reafen*, or raven, fell into the hands of the victors.

The news of this event was communicated to Alfred by the neatherd. The king immediately discovered himself to the hospitable peasant, and sent him with a message to the nobility who yet remained in the kingdom, requiring their attendance. Hastening to his retreat, a number of his faithful nobles came to receive the commands of their sovereign: he gave them instructions to collect small bodies of troops, in different parts of the kingdom, stationed so that they might co-operate in any emergency.

But Alfred and his adherents were unacquainted with the force and position of the enemy; it was therefore expedient that a spy should be sent to obtain

* Asserius.

the requisite information. The king resolved to engage in this dangerous public service himself; and in the habit of a minstrel, with a harp in his hand, he boldly entered the Danish camp. His disguise and skill as a musician deceived the enemy, who, though ferocious as tygers, were vincible by harmony.—Having continued some days in the enemy's camp, and made the necessary observations, he returned to a few of his nobles, who remained at the river-*isle*, which was afterwards called *Æthelingley*,* or *the isle of nobles*, as a memorial of the interesting fact, that it was once the court of Alfred the Great.

Alfred appointed Selwood Forest as the rendezvous of his army; and in a few days, so great was the joy of his subjects when informed that their king was alive, and their indignation against those enemies who had reduced him to adversity, that he found himself at the head of a powerful body of forces, with which he immediately marched to attack the Danes.

Surprized at this unexpected opposition, the Danes were thrown into evident confusion on the approach of Alfred, who, in a short and animated address to his countrymen, called forth all their martial enthusiasm. He then gave the signal of battle, and attacked the Danish van with irresistible valour. The conflict was long and sanguinary, but it ended in the total discomfiture of the Danes, who were entirely destroyed, except a small number that retreated into an adjacent castle.

These fugitives were immediately besieged by the victorious English, who, animated by the example and presence of their king, soon compelled the Danes to capitulate. According to the terms granted by Alfred, he agreed to give possession of East Anglia to those Danes who were willing to become

* Distant from Taunton, in Somersetshire, about five miles.—Hollinshead's Brit. Hist. p. 217.

Christians ; but required that the rest should immediately quit the island, never to return to England. Hostages were also required for the performance of this agreement. Guthrum, governor of East Anglia, who after the death of Hubba commanded the Danish army, agreed to these conditions ; and having shipped off all those Danes who refused to be baptized, he surrendered himself, with thirty of his chief officers, to Alfred. The king was his sponsor at the font, and gave him the name of Athelstan.*

Alfred treated the vanquished Danes with great humanity, and honourably performed his engagement with them ; in consequence of which, all their countrymen who had settled in the three kingdoms of the Angles, submitted to his authority, and swore allegiance to him as their sovereign. Hence, by a single but decisive victory, Alfred not only conquered the Danes, but was re-established in his kingdom, with an accession of power, from the submission of his neighbours.

But the Danes were insincere, and embraced Christianity more from necessity than principle: they considered their oath of allegiance to Alfred merely as the exaction of a conqueror, and as such, no longer binding than suited their own convenience. With these sentiments, they were ready to revolt whenever a favourable opportunity should occur ; and when Hastings, a Danish pirate, landed in Kent, he was joined by a great number of his countrymen, and marched to besiege Rochester. But the vigilance of Alfred baffled those desperadoes ; he advanced with his army, by forced marches, to oppose them, and compelled them to abandon their plunder, and retreat with precipitation to their ships.

When Alfred was completely re-established on the throne, he turned his attention to the protection of his subjects from the future invasions of those

* Hollinshead's Brit. Hist. p. 214.

Danish rovers, who, by dividing their piratical fleet into small squadrons, had long infested the coasts of England, and rendered them uninhabitable. For this purpose he built a fleet, manned it with the utmost expedition, and entrusted the command of it to an admiral of invincible courage, with instructions to take or destroy all Danish vessels, without distinction.

The English fleet sailed on a cruise off the coast; and the admiral having observed sixteen of the enemy's ships at anchor in the port of Harwich, he attacked, and captured or sunk the whole. His vigilance and resolution soon cleared the seas of the Danish pirates, who no longer ventured to approach a coast where destruction awaited them, and the kingdom was soon restored to a state of tranquillity.

But the subjugation of the Danes was considered by Alfred incomplete, while they remained in possession of London; which, situated on a navigable river, was favourable to a communication with Denmark, and consequently exposed England to the danger of future invasion. He therefore besieged that city with such vigour, that the Danes were soon compelled to come to a capitulation.

Alfred being now master of London, which was the most populous city in the kingdom, he made it the royal residence, and convened the assembly of the states there, which was held twice every year, for the establishment of the laws. By this public measure, he awed the Danish residents, who, admitted to a participation of rights with his other subjects, acknowledged that sovereignty against which they were no longer able to rebel.

In the year 887, an universal tranquillity prevailed throughout England; and for the future protection of the sea-coast, Alfred built several castles and forts, insomuch that there was not an inlet accessible to an enemy which was left unfortified.

Prior to this important epoch, which is the most remarkable recorded in English history, Bristol, in common with several sea-ports, had been reduced to a ruinous state, having been abandoned by the principal part of its inhabitants, when the edifices consecrated to the worship of the Deity were destroyed by the malignity of the heathenish Danes. It was now rebuilt by Alfred, who undoubtedly was the founder of its Castle, as has already been mentioned.*

Thus protected by the wisdom and valour of their sovereign, the English ventured to repeople those towns and districts adjacent to the seacoast, which had for some years been abandoned. All the benefits of peace, plenty, and prosperity, gradually arose like a new creation out of the chaos of a disorganized state, which was now restored to order by the active beneficence of a prince, who might indeed be denominated the vicegerent of the Deity, appointed to protect, instruct, and humanize his countrymen.

Alfred was acknowledged by the different provinces as King of England; the Welch became his tributaries, and the King of Scotland paid him homage. Even the Danes who remained in England were so struck with admiration of his clemency and justice, that they cheerfully submitted to his authority. This sudden exaltation, however, was uninjurious to a sovereign, who evinced his magnanimity in the extremes of adversity and prosperity. He was ever the same dignified hero and humble Christian.

In private life he was amiable and unassuming, according to the most authentic records. His consort, Ethelswitha, was the daughter of Ethelred, Earl of Mercia, and their progeny were two sons and three daughters.†

* Page 70.

† Hollinshead's British History, p. 216.

But it is in the public character of Alfred that we are to contemplate the preeminence of that master-mind, which has since commanded the gratitude and veneration of posterity. England, during the incursions of the Danes, had been reduced to a state of lawless degradation. Every religious and moral tie was dissolved in the general confusion and carnage. Man plundered or assassinated his fellow-creature without compassion or restraint, for the subversion of government and the suspension of law, permitted the uncontroulled depredations of banditti. Consequently, on the restoration of Alfred, he found himself at the head of an ignorant and intractable people, whose respect for their sovereign was principally excited by their conviction of his superiority in military prowess and skill.

Thus circumstanced, the comprehensive mind of this great legislator looked forward, through the vista of anticipation, to happier times, when ignorance and ferocity would give place to intellectual refinement, and the humanizing arts of civilization. With the ardour of intuitive genius, he beheld the gradual progress of posterity, through all the gradations of improvement and exaltation, to the proud zenith of national glory. With his own hand he formed the basis of that superstructure, which has since been the envy of surrounding nations; and hence, Alfred the Great may, under the guidance of Divine Providence, be considered as the tutelary genius of British liberty, virtue, and happiness.

For the reorganization of the state, Alfred devised equitable laws, tending at once to protect the weak, and repress the violent. He restrained the self-love of man from the perpetration of injustice, by the inculcation of moral principles; and directed the natural propensity of the human heart to self-gratification, to its proper object, by the immunities and honours conferred on merit.

He digested a code founded on the decalogue, and several of the judicial laws of the Old Testament; united with many of those of his predecessor, Ina; Offa, King of Mercia; and Ethelbert, King of Kent.*

* Spelman.

For the investigation and establishment of this code, he summoned a convocation, consisting of a secret council of a select number of individuals, who were in the confidence of their sovereign; a second council, composed of bishops, earls, judges, and some of the principal thanes or barons; and a third council, called the Wittena-gemot, or assembly of the nation, to which rank and office entitled the individual to admission independent of the sovereign. This *first English parliament* assisted the king with their advice and concurrence, and facilitated the equal distribution of justice.

For the better protection of his subjects from outrage or injustice, Alfred ordained, that in all criminal actions, twelve men, chosen with the approbation of the person accused, should determine the matter according to evidence; and that the judge should pronounce sentence, agreeably to their decision. Numerous banditti and vagabond depredators still infested several parts of the kingdom, for the suppression of whom, and the restoration of order and justice, the king divided England into counties, hundreds, and tythings. Every householder was responsible for the conduct of his wife, his children under fifteen years of age, and his domestic servants. The tything was accountable for the householders, the hundred for the tythings, and the county for the hundreds. Hence the body politic was like a regulated machine, under the controul of the mechanist; while the protection so impartially afforded to every individual, operated as an excitement to industry.

Internal peace and subordination being thus established, the sovereign embodied the militia; each county furnishing its quota proportionate to the population. These troops, commanded by the earls or governors of the counties, were always in readiness to march to any point, for the defence of the state; while the fleet, augmented and divided into small squadrons, cruised round the island to prevent invasion.

Having thus provided for the security of his people, Alfred turned their attention to the benefits arising from manufactures and commerce. For this purpose he built several ships, which he let to merchants, who, availing themselves of the royal patronage, and the advantages of their insular situation, soon realized wealth, by a commercial intercourse with other nations. Artificers and manufacturers were invited from the Continent, by the encouragement so liberally held out to them by the English sovereign; a spirit of national enterprize was roused, especially in the sea-ports, the choicest produce of distant climes was imported, and English merchandise exported in exchange.* Thus realizing the benefits of commercial union, so beautifully described by the poet.

“Heav’n speed the canvas gallantly unfurl’d,
 “To furnish and accommodate a world;
 “To give the pole the produce of the sun,
 “And knit th’ unsocial climates into one.—
 “Soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave
 “Impel the fleet, whose errand is to save,
 “To succour wasted regions, and replace
 “The smile of Opulence in Sorrow’s face—
 “Let nothing adverse, nothing unforeseen,
 “Impede the bark, that plows the deep serene,
 “Charg’d with a freight transcending in its worth,
 “The gems of India, Nature’s rarest birth,
 “That flies like Gabriel on his Lord’s commands,
 “A herald of God’s love to Pagan lands.”

How different is the prospect presented by England in the course of a few years! Instead of the smoking ruins of sea-ports, plundered and destroyed by

* We are told by Malmsbury, that King Alfred sent a present to the Indies in honour of St. Thomas. Sigelin, bishop of Sherborn, was employed to deliver it, and that prelate returned with precious stones, perfumes, and other oriental commodities, which were then great rarities in England. It is thought that those valuable gems adorned the crown which he wore on solemn occasions.

pirates, while the interior exhibited scenes of carnage, misery, and despoliation, we behold our ancestors, under the protecting genius of Alfred, cultivating the useful and ornamental arts of peace, defended by an army and navy, and adventuring, with all the animation of enterprize, to distant regions of the globe. Hence the origin of the opulence, refinement, and elegance of London, Bristol, and other maritime towns, in which the inhabitants enjoy all the privileges and gratifications that can render life desirable and happy.

When Alfred had contributed to the political and commercial prosperity of his people, he introduced those elegant arts, which so essentially promote the rational pleasures of man. An ardent votary of literature, himself, he patronised the arts and sciences with unbounded liberality; and having invited over learned men from foreign countries, he stationed them in the several dioceses for the instruction of the people. In the year 886 he founded three schools or colleges at Oxford,* and expended a part of his revenue in the education of several young noblemen, who were instructed in every branch of knowledge that might qualify them for employments of trust and honour in the state. Some of those noble pupils were educated at court, under the immediate eye of the sovereign, and others at Oxford.

The piety of Alfred was as sincere as his love of learning, and he built three abbeys for the accommodation of the recluse and devout. The first of these was founded in the Isle of Athelney, as a memorial of his pious gratitude. "This isle had formerly a bridge between two towers, which were built by King Alfred; also a very large grove of alders, full of goats and deer; but

* Alfred was the founder of three colleges at Oxford, and their situation is very exactly described by that learned antiquary, Camden. "The first," says he, "at the end of High-street, for Grammarians, was called Little-University-Hall; the second, in School-street, for Philosophy, was stiled Less-University-Hall; and the third, in High-street, more to the west than the first, for Divinity, was named Great-University-Hall, now University-College."—Camden's Britannia.

the firm ground not above two acres. Upon this he built a monastery,* the whole structure whereof is supported by four posts fastened in the ground, with four arched chancels around it."† Alfred also built Winchester Abbey, then called the new minster, and the nunnery at Shaftesbury, of which his own daughter, the Princess Elgiva, was the first abbess.

* A small curious amulet of enamel and gold, richly ornamented, was found in 1693, in Newton Park, at some distance northward from the Abbey. On one side of it is a rude figure of a person sitting crowned, and holding in each hand a sceptre surmounted by a lilly, which Dr. Hickes and other antiquaries have imagined to be designed for St. Cuthbert. The other side is filled by a large flower, and round the edge is the following legend: "AELFRED MEC HEIT GEVVRCAN;" that is, *Alfred ordered me to be made*. This piece of antiquity is now in the Museum at Oxford, accompanied with the accounts of Doctors Hickes and Musgrave, and the following memorandum:—"Nov. 16, 1718, Tho. Palmer, Esq. of Fairfield, in Somersetshire, put this ancient picture of St. Cuthbert, made by order of King Alfred, into my hands, to be conveyed to the Bodleian Library in Oxford, where his father Nat. Palmer, Esq. lately dead, desired it might be placed and preserved. Geo. Clark."

Collinson's History of Somersetshire. Vol. I. p. 87.

"Dr. Hickes, in his Thesaurus, has engraved a famous jewel of this King. It was found in the Isle of Athelney, where King Alfred, in his distresses, concealed himself so successfully, and afterwards in gratitude for that signal deliverance, erected a monastery. It is not certainly known to what use this valuable curiosity, which it seems is of exquisite workmanship, far superior to what might be expected from the rude state of arts in those times, might be put; but amongst other conjectures, Mr. Wise imagines, and very probably, it might have been the handle of a stylus.

* * * * *

"Dr. Musgrave once thought it might have been an amulet; but Alfred never ran, that we know of, into such vanities. Dr. Hickes thought it might be the head of our Saviour, or of the Pope that consecrated this King in his youth. He imagined afterwards, the King might wear it on his breast as a constant memorial of St. Cuthbert, whose head he supposes to be represented on it.—Mr. Wise objects to its being either the head of Christ, or St. Cuthbert, on account of the military habit and the helmet; and proposes it to consideration, whether it may not be the head of Alfred himself.—The weight of this jewel is about one ounce five-eighths."

Archaeologia, Vol. II. p. 72, &c.

† Malmesbury.

Among other improvements in the arts of civilization, Alfred improved the English cities and towns, by the introduction of ornamental architecture. The art of brick-making was first known in England during his reign; and he not only built his palaces, but also several churches, castles, and other edifices, of brick or stone. The superior elegance and durability of those buildings, induced the nobles to imitate their sovereign; but the common people, either from inability, or want of refinement, continued to build their houses of wood, or hurdles and clay. Various improvements in furniture, household utensils, and instruments of husbandry, were also gradually introduced; and the seat with three legs,* on which this amiable prince might have sat in the early part of his reign, was displaced for the chair of state, and the superb canopy.

In private life, this great prince was equally exemplary, amiable, and beneficent. During his seclusion in Athelney, he vowed to devote the third part of his time to the service of his Creator, as soon as he should be restored to his original dignity; and he performed this votive engagement with scrupulous punctuality.

He divided the day into three parts, allotting eight hours to devotion, eight to public business, and eight to reflection, study, and repose. Clocks and hour-glasses were then unknown in England; he therefore invented the expedient of wax-candles, marked with circular equidistant lines of different colours, which served as hour-lines. These candles were inclosed in lanterns of transparent horn, to preserve them from the action of the air; and after a few experiments, he arrived at such precision with this apparatus, that he was enabled to ascertain the horal division of time with exactness.†

* "On such a stool immortal Alfred sat,

"And swayed the sceptre of his infant realms."———COWPER.

† He ordered a quantity of wax to be made into six candles, each twelve inches long, with the division of inches marked out distinctly. These being lighted one after another, did orderly burn four hours apiece, that is, every three inches an hour, so that the whole six candles lasted just twenty-four hours, the watching of which was committed to the keepers of his chapel, whose office it was to put him in mind how each hour passed."—Spelman.

He divided his revenue, which consisted entirely of his own hereditary estate, into two parts, one of which was appropriated to charitable uses. It was subdivided into four parts: the first was distributed in alms; the second was given for the maintenance of the monasteries; the third for the subsistence of the professors and students at Oxford; and the fourth for the relief of poor monks, as well foreigners as English.

The other moiety was disbursed in three divisions: the first for the use of his family; the second in paying his architects, and ingenious artificers; and the third was bestowed in pensions to learned foreigners, whom he had invited to his court for the instruction of the English.

When we consider the general ignorance of his countrymen at that period, the attainments of Alfred must appear truly extraordinary. Endued with a perception of whatever was sublime or elegant in nature and art, he devoted his juvenile hours to study; and his diffusive beneficence afterwards imparted the knowledge thus obtained, not only to his cotemporaries, but posterity. He translated into the Saxon language Gregory's Pastoral, Boethius de Consolatione, and Bede's Ecclesiastical History. He also began a translation of the Psalms, but did not live to finish it.* So great was his zeal for the encouragement of learning, that literary attainments were requisite qualifications for any post of honour at his court, or in the government of the people. In private life, his manners were amiable, and he delighted in the conversation of men of learning and genius, whom he retained near his person. Hence his court became one of the most polite in Europe, and exhibited a respectable combination of talents and virtues, sanctioned by the patronage of a prince, who himself outshone all competitors.

After a reign of twenty-eight years and six months, this great prince died on the 28th day of October, A. D. 900, to the inexpressible regret of his people,

* Asserius.

to whom he had ever been a most liberal benefactor and affectionate father. He was buried—first in Winchester Cathedral, but the superstitious canons having raised a report that he frequently appeared to them, his body was afterwards taken up by his son and successor King Edward, and interred in the monastery of that city.

The language of panegyric fails in an attempt to describe the character of Alfred, who is justly denominated *the Great*. Even at this remote period, after a lapse of nine centuries, his virtues shine with undiminished lustre, and a degree of superior excellence that supersedes comparison. Peter, the legislator of Russia, can alone have any pretension to a competition with our illustrious law-giver. But Peter, though great as a sovereign, was inferior to Alfred in the social virtues;* and even when we compare their public labours, the Englishman deserves pre-eminence.

* The following anecdotes, illustrative of the benignity and moral excellence of Alfred, will enable the reader more fully to appreciate the character of that extraordinary prince and philosopher.

“ In the year of our Lord’s incarnation 886, in the second year of St. Grimbald’s coming over into England, the University of Oxford was founded; the first regents there and readers in Divinity, were St. Neot, an abbot, and eminent professor of Theology; and St. Grimbald, an eloquent and most excellent interpreter of the holy scriptures: Grammar and Rhetorick were taught by Asserius, a monk, a man of extraordinary learning: Logick, Music, and Arithmetick, were read by John, a monk of St. David’s: Geometry and Astronomy, were professed by John, a monk and colleague of St. Grimbald, one of a sharp wit and immense knowledge. These lectures were often honoured with the presence of the most illustrious and invincible monarch, King Alfred, whose memory, to every judicious taste, shall be always sweeter than honey.”—Annals of the Monastery of Winchester.

“ There arose a sharp and grievous dissension between Grimbald and those learned men whom he brought hither with him, and the old scholars whom he found here at his coming; for these absolutely refused to comply with the statutes, institutions, and forms of reading, prescribed by Grimbald. The difference proceeded to no great height for the space of three years; yet there was always a private grudge and enmity between them, which soon after broke out with the utmost violence imaginable. To appease these tumults, the most invincible King Alfred, being informed of the faction by a message and complaint from Grimbald, came to Oxford with a design to accommodate the matter, and submitted to a great deal of pains and patience, to hear the cause and complaint

Indeed the energetic and active genius of Alfred perceived, as it were, intuitively, whatever could contribute to the civilization and felicity of his countrymen.

“ He found them savage, and he left them tame.”

To his venerable name is attached the idea of whatever is extraordinary, admirable, and estimable in the human character. Alfred may justly be considered one of those honourable instruments of Divine Philanthropy with which the omniscient Deity, from time to time, enlightens and reforms mankind; thus mercifully preventing that retrogression into barbarism and brutalized ignorance, which otherwise would inevitably deface his fairest work in the visible creation. The history of all nations will prove illustrative of this important fact: all communities have been blest with their illustrious law-givers; and England may, with the exultation of conscious superiority, confront the talents and virtues of her immortal Alfred, with those of the most renowned benefactors of the human race.

“ Let laurels drench'd in pure Parnassian dews,

“ Reward his memory, dear to every muse:

“ 'Tis to the virtues of such men, man owes

“ His portion in the good that Heav'n bestows.”

of both parties. The controversy depended upon this: the old scholars maintained, that before the coming of Grimbold to Oxford, learning did here flourish, though the students were then less in number than they had formerly been, because that very many of them had been expelled by the cruel tyranny of Pagans. They further declared and proved, and that by the undoubted testimony of their ancient annals, that good orders and constitutions for the government of that place, had been already made by men of great piety and learning, such as Gildas, Melkin, Ninnius, Kentigern, and others, who had there prosecuted their studies to a good old age, all things being then managed in happy peace and quiet: and that St. German coming to Oxford, and residing there half-a-year, what time he went through all England to preach down the Pelagian heresy, did well approve of their rules and orders.

“ The King, with incredible humility and great attention, heard out both parties, exhorting them with pious and importunate entreaties, to preserve love and amity with one another. Upon this he left them, in hopes that both parties would follow his advice, and obey his instructions. But Grimbold resenting these proceedings, retired immediately to the monastery at Winchester, which King Alfred had lately founded; and soon after, he got his tomb to be removed thither to him, in which he had designed his bones should be put after his decease, and laid in a vault under the chancel of the church of St. Peter, in Oxford; which church the said Grimbold had raised from the ground, of stones hewn and carved with great art and beauty.”——Asserius.

England, during the latter part of the reign of her great legislator, had made a rapid progress in those arts which promote civilization. Her coast, protected by a powerful fleet; her merchants secured in the possession of their property; and her people in general governed by magistrates whose indispensable qualification for the appointment was integrity, presented a scene of human felicity never before beheld in this country. During this tranquil period, population multiplied in England; a traffick with the maritime nations of the Continent contributed to the diffusion of general knowledge; a taste for learning, and the liberal arts, was cultivated by the nobility and clergy; and the native produce of the soil was exchanged for the elegancies of Flanders, France, Italy, and Spain.

Soon after the accession of Edward, however, the Danish settlers who occupied nearly one half of England, made an insurrection in favour of Ethelward, the son of Ethelbert, who claimed the crown; while the English, in consequence of their veneration for Alfred, continued firm in their attachment to his son. Edward, who obtained repeated victories over the Danes, compelled them to submission; and, after a glorious reign of twenty-four years, died, and was succeeded by his son Athelstan, in the early part of whose reign England was harrassed by intestine commotions, and foreign invasion.

Athelstan, who had been knighted by his grand-father Alfred, and who inherited the valour of his predecessor, was victorious over all his enemies. He died in the year 941, after a reign of sixteen years. This prince left the kingdom in a state of profound tranquillity, and is recorded by the monks for his piety, learning, and munificence. During his reign, the bible was translated into Saxon, the language then generally spoken throughout England; and this great work, which was accurately performed by Englishmen, yet remains, a memorial of the successful establishments of Alfred, for the encouragement of learning.

Edmund, the brother and successor of Athelstan, during a short and troublesome, but glorious reign, repressed the Danes who were in possession of

Northumberland, and part of Mercia. An army of Danes and Norwegians, stimulated by reports of the beauty and fertility of England, invaded Northumberland, where they were joined by Danish insurgents. But after several conflicts, Edmund not only conquered those invaders, but compelled the two Danish princes, Anlaff and Reginald, to abandon the island. Having thus restored peace to his country, Edmund endeavoured to promote the security of his people, by enacting a law for the punishment of robbers. According to that law, the oldest delinquent in gangs of robbers was condemned to the gallows; but the audacity of those depredators led to an incident that was fatal to the king.

In the year 948, as Edmund was solemnizing a public festival, in honour of St. Augustin, at Puckle-Church, in Gloucestershire, he observed Leolf, a notorious robber, who had been banished for his crimes. This outlaw had the audacity to come and sit at one of the tables in the hall, where the king was at dinner, who, exasperated at his presumption, ordered him to be apprehended. Perceiving that Leolf drew his dagger to defend himself, Edmund leaped up, and seizing him by the hair, dragged him out of the hall; but before the attendants could interfere, the robber stabbed him in the breast with his dagger, and the nation was deprived of this excellent prince, in the twenty-fifth year of his age, and eighth of his reign.

His successor, Edred, was only remarkable for his munificence to the monks. From the middle to the end of the tenth century, England was governed by six native kings, the most remarkable of whom was Edgar. This wise sovereign, by the augmentation of his navy and army, overawed the Danes who lived in his dominions, and deterred those of the Continent from invasion. According to one author,* he fitted out four thousand ships. Another writer† asserts, that the number of his shipping amounted to four thousand eight hundred; but their

* Malmesbury.

† Matthew of Westminster.

statements were probably exaggerated. This formidable fleet, which cruised around the island, prevented the descent of Danish pirates.

The foreign commerce of England at this time* must have been considerable, and naval architecture much encouraged; for it would have been impossible for King Edgar to have built and manned his fleet, if the English merchants had not supplied him with shipwrights and mariners. It is probable, indeed, that he hired some of the sailors of Flanders and France, and also employed fishermen on board his navy; but the majority of seamen were undoubtedly his own countrymen.

London and Bristol were the principal sea-ports of England at this period; and the importation of foreign merchandise introduced a degree of opulence and refinement into those cities, unknown in the other towns of the kingdom. The situation of Bristol, and its communication with several navigable rivers, facilitated its inland trade with Wessex, Wales, and Mercia; and it is not improbable that many continental articles of commerce were then exported from this port to Ireland.

After the demise of Edgar, England was ruled by his two sons in succession; but during the reign of Ethelred, the kingdom was overrun by the Danes. In 1016, Edmund, the successor of Ethelred, and Canute, King of Denmark, consented to an amicable partition of the English territories: during the following year, the Anglo-Saxon prince was assassinated, and the Dane was immediately proclaimed Monarch of England. He reigned nineteen years, and died A. D. 1036.

After an uninterrupted succession of three Danish kings, namely, Canute, Harold I. and Hardicanute, the latter having left no issue, the crown devolved to Edward III. the son of Ethelred II.

* A. D. 960.

During the reign of that prince, the Danes entirely lost their influence in England; nay, it is recorded by the Danish historians, that all their countrymen in this kingdom were assassinated in one night. The English historians are silent on this subject; but the sudden diminution, or rather cessation of Danish power in this country, in the year 1042, is an incontrovertible fact, which amounts to a proof that the Danes must either have been massacred or expelled.

The restoration of the Saxon line to the throne, was doubtless a subject of triumph to every patriotic Englishman. Edward died in the year 1066, after a reign of twenty-five years, and was succeeded by Harold, whose succession was disputed by William Duke of Normandy. That prince, under the pretext that the crown of England was bequeathed to him by Edward, prepared to enforce his claim by an appeal to arms. Harold, who had made the requisite preparations to repel the expected invader, waited some months for the Duke of Normandy's arrival; but on receiving intelligence that he had postponed his embarkation to the spring, he rashly unrigged his fleet, and disbanded his army.

Another invader, however, soon afterwards made a descent on the coast of England. Harfager, King of Norway, accompanied by Earl Toston, brother of Harold, entered the Tyne, with a fleet of five hundred sail, and ravaged the country on both sides of that river. Harold hastily collected his army, marched against the Norwegians, and engaged them at Stanford-bridge, on the Derwent, near York, where, after a battle of eight hours, the invaders were defeated, and Harfager and Toston both slain. The discomfiture of the Norwegians was so complete, that out of an army of sixty thousand men that came over in five hundred ships, the remains were reimbarbed, with the permission of the victorious Harold, on board of twenty vessels.

While King Harold was thus successfully engaged in the north, in the expulsion of his enemies, the Duke of Normandy set sail with a fair wind from St. Valery, and landed at Pevensey, in Sussex, in the month of September, 1066. William marched immediately to Hastings, where he erected a fort, and published a manifesto, declarative of his reasons for invading England.

This unjustifiable invasion excited the strongest emotions in the minds of the English nobility, who prepared with alacrity to arm their dependants, and march against the common enemy. One general sentiment of heroic ardour seemed to animate every bosom; and couriers were dispatched with the news of the Norman invasion to King Harold, who was at the head of his victorious army in the north of England.

Harold immediately proceeded by forced marches to London, where he was joined by the nobility, and advanced without delay to meet the Normans. On the 14th of October, at daybreak, the two armies came to a general engagement, in which Harold displayed his characteristic heroism in the fairest light. He fought on foot in the centre of the van, which consisted of Kentish men, who had long been in possession of that post of honour. At the head of these brave troops, Harold boldly exposed himself to the greatest danger, animating his men by his voice and example.

The Norman army, drawn up in three grand divisions, commenced the attack with a volley of arrows, which annoyed the close ranks of the English, who, unaccustomed to this method of warfare, were thrown into momentary confusion. Encouraged by the apparent disorder of their opponents, the Normans pressed forward sword in hand; but the English, who were rallied by Harold and his officers, met them with such bravery, that they were soon compelled to retreat with breathless precipitation. On a renewal of the conflict,

they were unable to penetrate the firm phalanxes of the English, who stood their ground with invincible resolution.

During this ardent and momentous contest, the soldiers of both armies fought hand to hand, and a scene of carnage ensued in which the front ranks, thinned by the sword, were continually reinforced by fresh troops from the rear. Animated by the heroism of their officers, both Englishmen and Normans evinced the most undaunted courage, and fought with a determination to conquer or die, insomuch that the victory was at length obtained only by stratagem.

The Duke of Normandy, who was an experienced warrior, perceiving that it was impossible to break the ranks of the English, issued orders to his officers that the troops should feign a retreat, and at the same time keep their ranks unbroken. On the retreat of the Normans, they were fiercely pursued by the English, who encouraged each other by reiterated shouts of triumph to press the retiring enemy. But in the ardour of pursuit, their ranks were broken, and the Normans, on a preconcerted signal, again formed, attacked the English army then in disarray, and compelled them to retreat, with dreadful slaughter.

Harold made incredible exertions to rally his troops, and succeeded in drawing up a considerable body of infantry upon an eminence, near the field of battle. It was now the close of an eventful day, and the contest was yet undecided. The English, confiding in the wisdom and valour of their king, resolved to maintain their position, and renew the battle on the following morning; but the Duke of Normandy, eager to complete his victory, attacked them with impetuosity, but was repelled with great loss. He resolved, however, to make another effort, and in this attack Harold was slain by an arrow, which penetrated his head. With the fall of their king, the English lost their resolution, and retreated, exposed to the relentless rage of a victorious enemy. A considerable part of the English army, however, retired from the

field, under the conduct of Morcar and Edwin, two noblemen of distinguished bravery.

Thus fell the last of the Saxon kings, on the bed of honour, like a true patriot, with his sword in his hand, in defence of his country's cause. Posterity has not done justice to the civic virtue of this brave but unfortunate prince, whose memory ought to be dear to every patriot.

“ And when recording history displays
 “ Feats of renown, though wrought in ancient days,
 “ Tells of a few stout hearts, that fought and died,
 “ Where duty placed them, at their country's side ;
 “ The man that is not mov'd with what he reads,
 “ That takes not fire at their heroic deeds,
 “ Unworthy of the blessings of the brave,
 “ Is base in kind, and born to be a slave.”

After the battle of Hastings, in which Harold, and the flower of the English nobility and army were slain, the victor proceeded with great precaution in securing his conquest. He first besieged Dover, which in a few days opened its gates ; and he afterwards marched to the vicinity of London, and encamped in Southwark. Morcar, Earl of Chester, and his brother Edwin, Earl of Northumberland, who had survived the conflict, and were at the head of the army in London, warmly exhorted the citizens to place Edgar Atheling on the throne. This proposal met the general approbation of the people ; but the clergy, with the Archbishops of London and York at their head, strenuously opposed it, from motives of avarice and pusillanimity. The enterprize of the Norman adventurer had originally received the sanction of the pontiff himself, and consequently that warrior was considered as under the immediate protection of the church ; the clergy, therefore, exerted their influence among the citizens, in favour of a victorious foreign invader, from whose munificence they had reason to expect lasting benefit. The patriotic party were consequently obliged

to submit, and William entered London in triumph, where he was soon afterwards crowned, and proclaimed King of England.

By the moderation and prudence of his conduct to his new subjects, he soon obtained their universal submission; and his impartial administration of justice, for some months after his coronation, induced the English to consider him as a great and virtuous sovereign, in consequence of which they ceased to lament the revolution as a national calamity.

But the conqueror gradually developed his real character, which was a hideous compound of avarice, injustice, and pride. He now treated his English subjects with rigour; and having quelled an insurrection which happened the second year of his reign, and compelled several of the native nobility to seek refuge in Scotland, he disarmed the people, to prevent another revolt. He also resorted to the arbitrary measure of compelling the English to extinguish their lights at eight o'clock every evening, when a bell, called the Curfew,* was rung as a signal.

But his oppressions did not terminate here, for in the year 1070, he seized upon all the baronies and fiefs of the crown, and distributed them among his Norman followers. Hence the ancient English nobility were deprived of their heritage, and reduced to a state of extreme indigence and misery; while the common people languished in abject and hopeless vassalage. Such were the calamities which followed submission to a foreign usurper, whom the nation might, by a bold effort, have precipitated from that throne of which he was unworthy.

“ King William the Conqueror reserved in his own hands, or in those of his farmers or tenants at will, or for short terms of years, a great part of

* *Couvre feu*, or cover fire.

the lands of England ; the same, as it is said, that were in the hands of his predecessor, Edward the Confessor, for the support of his royal dignity, and the ordinary expences of government. The rest of the lands of England he granted away to his Norman and French companions, in very large quantities, dispossessing for the most part the former English possessors of them. This he did not, indeed, do at first, because he claimed the crown of England by a legal, or pretendedly legal, title ; namely, the appointment of Edward the Confessor, ratified by the consent of the principal great men of England ; and consequently he would not, consistently with this pretence, and in fact he did not, make use of his victory over Harold, as a victory over the whole English nation, that authorized him to treat them as a conquered people : but he confiscated, and granted away to his Normans, only the estates of such of the English as had assisted Harold, and whom he considered in the light of rebels ; leaving the rest of the English in quiet possession of their lands, upon their swearing allegiance to him. Those, however, who had adhered to Harold, and whose estates were confiscated upon that ground, were very many ; and by that means the Normans became immediately possessed of very great estates in England. Afterwards the English made several insurrections against King William, in different years of his reign ; and he came to have so strong a suspicion of their fidelity to his government, that he took occasion, from those insurrections, to dispossess them almost all of their lands, and give them to his Normans ; insomuch, that towards the latter end of his reign, there were extremely few English in the nation, that held lands under him, or at least that held any land immediately of him, which was the most powerful and most honourable kind of tenure. He even went further, as the cotemporary historians, and particularly Ingulphus assures us ; and would not suffer any Englishman whatsoever, though his merit and character were ever so great, to rise to any considerable employment, in church or state.

“ The lands which he thus granted away to his Norman companions, and which he permitted perhaps some few of the English to continue in the

possession of, he brought under the feudal law; that is, under the form of it which then prevailed in Normandy, the principal articles of which were these:—The landholders held their lands of the king by homage and fealty, and certain military services, that is, by doing homage to the king, and thereby declaring, that they became his *homines*, or men to assist him and serve him in all things relating to his worldly honour and glory; and by swearing fealty or fidelity to him, and by putting themselves under an obligation of attending and assisting him with a certain number of knights, or horsemen, armed with complete armour capapee, for a certain number of days, in all his wars: and they held these lands for them and their heirs for ever, that is probably to their children and descendants, but not as yet to their collateral relations. Upon failure of heirs, the lands were to fall back (*écori*) to the king, which was called *escheating*; as they were likewise upon the commission of treason against the king, and of murder or wilful homicide, and certain other atrocious crimes, called felonies.”*

Several centuries have passed away since Englishmen were reduced to such degradation; and with the public spirit, and resources which the inhabitants of this country now possess, the ambitious projects of any foreign despot against their chartered rights, and all the social blessings which they enjoy, would doubtless be repelled with patriotic valour.

“ Act but an honest and a faithful part;
 “ Compare what then thou wast, with what thou art;
 “ And God’s disposing providence confess’d,
 “ Obduracy itself will yield the rest.—
 “ Then thou art bound to serve Him, and to prove
 “ Hour after hour thy gratitude and love.

“ Has he not hid thee, and thy favour’d land,
 “ For ages safe beneath his shelt’ring hand,

* *Archæologia*, Vol. II. p. 301, &c.

" Giv'n thee his blessing on the clearest proof,
 " Bid nations leagued against thee stand aloof,
 " And charg'd Hostility and Hate to roar
 " Where else they would, but not upon thy shore?
 " Peculiar is the grace by thee possess'd,
 " Thy foes implacable, thy land at rest;
 " Thy thunders travel over earth and seas,
 " And all at home is pleasure, wealth, and ease.
 " Freedom in other lands scarce known to shine,
 " Pours out a flood of splendour upon thine;
 " Thou hast as bright an int'rest in her rays,
 " As ever Roman had in Rome's best days."

But the most iniquitous act of oppression perpetrated by the conqueror in England, was the depopulation of a district in Hampshire, above thirty miles in circumference, containing thirty-six parish churches, and one hundred hamlets or villages. This desolated space he planted with trees, and named it the New Forest: it was appropriated as a range for beasts of chace, and in it the Norman Nimrod amused himself with his favourite diversion of hunting.

This tyrant also endeavoured, but in vain, to abolish the English language, and for that purpose he established public schools in all the cities and boroughs of England, where the Norman, consisting of a barbarous jargon of intermingled French and Danish phrases was taught. All public acts were also written in the Norman language.

After a turbulent reign of forty-two years in Normandy, and twenty-one in England, William died at Hermentrude,* on the 9th of September, 1087, in the sixty-first year of his age. This conqueror was remarkable for courage and unshaken fortitude, qualities which have, in all ages, been high in the estimation of mankind; but the perverse misapplication of which, in the

* A village on the banks of the Seine, opposite Roan.

gratification of ambition, or self-aggrandizement, has been a fruitful source of human calamity.

“ Let eternal infamy pursue
 “ The wretch to nought but his ambition true;
 “ Who for the sake of filling with one blast
 “ The post-horns of all Europe—lays her waste.”

A retrospection of British history, from the invasion of the Normans in the eleventh century, to that of the Romans in the first, presents an afflictive scene of commotion, war, and devastation. Sometimes a momentary ray of intellectual excellence irradiates the dreary retrospect; and like “ a sunbeam in a winter’s day,” the virtues of a Caractacus, an Arthur, an Ina, and an Alfred, reconcile us to those dark ages, when the slow progress of our ancestors was the consequence, not of their own indocility, but the rapacity and ferocity of invaders. The unsettled state of society in England, during the contest of the natives and Danes, was unfavourable to civilization; and the revolution effected with such quickness and facility by William I. introduced an almost total change of polity and manners.

By conferring the confiscated estates of the English nobility, upon his Norman followers, William established a general feudal system in England; and the Norman barons who held their new possessions on the tenure of devoting their future services to their sovereign, were ready to march at the head of their vassals to his aid in warfare.

But exclusive of this obligation, the barons were, in a great degree, independent of their prince. When established in their new possessions, they considered themselves surrounded by enemies, and for their greater security, built castles, at once to overawe their English vassals, and protect themselves from the danger of assassination. Those fortresses, which were of much greater extent and strength than any constructed in England in the time of the Saxons, were

multiplied for some ages after the Norman conquest, in such numbers, that in the turbulent reign of King Stephen, when the kingdom was convulsed with civil war, no less than eleven hundred and fifteen castles were completely built in the space of nineteen years.*

The castles built by the Norman barons in England, during the reign of their countryman and benefactor, William I. were more remarkable for strength than magnificence; being hastily constructed of such rude materials as were to be found in the vicinity. Those gloomy towers, with their lofty battlements rising above the foliage of the circumjacent trees, formed a bold and picturesque object in the English landscape; which at once reminded the natives of their degradation, and the impossibility of emancipating their country, while such formidable castles were occupied by their oppressors. In those castles the barons resided amid their extensive domains, in all the pomp of isolated state, despising their vassals, and exercising uncontrolled authority.

From the time of the Norman conquest to the commencement of the thirteenth century, military architecture was cultivated and improved in this country, according to the most perfect models of fortification then known. As the feudal monarchy of William I. had been established by the sword, he was convinced that it could only be secured by military superiority. He therefore fortified several towns, and also built the castles of Lincoln, Huntingdon, and Cambridge, and the tower of London.

The situation of a castle was generally on an eminence, in the vicinity of a brook or river. The form varied according to the plan of the projector, and the extent of the edifice; it was fortified with a strong external wall, twelve feet high, flanked with towers, and surrounded with a deep moat, generally filled with water. A drawbridge, communicating with the entrance, was raised

* Grose's Antiquities.

on the inner bank of the fosse, to be let down when requisite; and beside the bridge, the barbican, or watch-tower, was erected.

But the principal and strongest part of the fortification, was the keep, a high square tower, divided into five floors. The subterranean floor was the dungeon; the ground floor was a reconditory for provisions, fuel, and arms; the second story was a barrack for the garrison; the third consisted of state-rooms for the baron and his family; and the fourth, or attic story, surmounted by turrets, was divided into bed-chambers. The windows were small in proportion to the size of the rooms. The walls of the keep were twelve feet thick, and the entrance of the portal was at the second story. This portal was approached by a stone staircase on the outside; and about halfway it was fortified by a strong gate, and the entrance was further secured by a drawbridge. Beyond the first entrance, another strong gate secured a small tower, which formed the vestibule of the keep, or citadel, and this portal was defended by a portcullis, formed of strong pieces of timber, with horizontal and perpendicular spikes of iron. This engine was fixed in grooves of stone, and was worked by a windlass; it was so ponderous, that in its sudden descent it was not only destructive to those assailants who attempted to force the entrance, but presented an almost insuperable obstacle to the further progress of the besieger. It was necessary to pass through this entrance, and the small tower, to the portal of the citadel; which was also fortified with strong gates, and a portcullis. A fortification constructed with such art must have been impregnable, before the invention of gun-powder; indeed, nothing less than famine or disease could reduce a determined garrison, in such a fortress, to the necessity of a capitulation.

Among those fortresses remarkable for extent and magnificence in feudal times, the castle of Bristol, rebuilt in the reign of Henry I. by his illegitimate son, Robert Earl of Gloucester, is one of the most remarkable recorded in English history. A variety of important and affecting events, equally interesting to the politician, the antiquarian, and the philosopher, have been transacted within its

boundaries. Its history affords a surprising and almost incredible variety of incidents, descriptive of human manners in the days of yore, and strongly illustrative of the perishable, fleeting, and evanescent glory of the world.

Within its precincts the splendid palace, and the gloomy dungeon, have realized the extremes of human happiness, and human misery. The laugh of festivity, and the shriek of assassinated innocence, have been re-echoed by its walls. The standards of royalty, and the banners of rebellion, have alternately waved in proud defiance, on its highest towers. War has displayed a host of assailants, scaling its strong battlements, and engaged in mortal conflict with its garrison, while the worst passions of man overspread its spacious courts with carnage and devastation.

How various and interesting have been the scenes of human life, exhibited in the castle of Bristol! Here the dauntless warrior has appeared, bracing on his armour to meet the foe, while his eyes beamed with the anticipation of victory; and hither the captive has been dragged to confinement, covered with wounds, yet indignantly silent, and suffering the most excruciating anguish with invincible fortitude. In the remote and darksome cells of its dungeon, the grim assassin has presented himself muffled, and hastening on tip-toe, dagger in hand, to sacrifice some victim to the vengeance or ambition of his employer. In the seclusion of hopeless solitude, in its remote apartments, have appeared the pale visage and tearful eyes of beauty languishing in captivity, from which only death could liberate the prisoner. Kings conquered in the field have been led in chains into Bristol castle, exposed to the taunts of haughty and triumphant malevolence; and have afterwards issued from its portals, to reassume the ensigns of royalty.

From a singular peculiarity of circumstances, it appears that a castle originally built for the protection of Bristol, was, in many instances, rendered detrimental to the security and prosperity of a city, to which, from its contiguity, it ought to have been a defence.

When Robert Duke of Normandy, brother to William I. concerted measures with his English partisans, for the dethronement of the king, the Bishop of Constance, with his nephew Mowbray Earl of Northumberland, summoned their vassals in Bath, Berkley, and Bristol, to join their standard. The bishop took possession of the castle of Bristol, which, though small, was well fortified; but the indolence of the Duke of Normandy defeated the plans of his friends, and rendered the conspiracy unsuccessful. He ceded his right to the crown of England to his brother William, for a yearly pension of three thousand marks, on condition that he should inherit the crown as successor. The Bishop of Constance, and his partisans, were therefore obliged to evacuate the castle of Bristol, and it was conferred by the king, in the year 1089, with the honour* and earldom of Gloucester, on Robert Fitzhamon, a valiant and faithful subject, whose activity and zeal had been instrumental to the failure of the plot in favour of the Duke of Normandy.

There is nothing important on record, respecting the castle, during the time it was in the possession of the first Earl of Gloucester, who does not appear to have made it his residence. He died in 1107, and the castle, with his hereditary possessions, devolved to his eldest daughter Matilda, who was married in the year 1009 to Robert, illegitimate son of Henry I.

It appears from the account given by Robert of Gloucester, in the following lines, that the king was suitor for his son, on which occasion the lady, conscious of the importance attached to her wealth and rank, insisted that a higher title of nobility should be conferred on her lover, prior to the marriage.

" He sede heo ssolde hys sone to hyre spouse anonge,

" This mayde was ther agen and with syde yt longe,

* The honour of Gloucester contained three hundred and twenty-seven knights fees, and some fractions; that is, upwards of two hundred and twenty-two thousand three hundred and sixty acres.—Archæologia, vol. 2, p. 335.

" The king of soght hyre suite ynon that atenende,
 " Mabile him answerede as gode mayde and hende,
 " Sire hoe syde wel y cot that youre herte up me ys,
 " More vor myne eritage than vor my sulue ywis,
 " So vair eritage as ych abbe, yt were me gret same,
 " Vor to abbe an Loverd, bote he adde an tu name,
 " Sr. Roberd le Fyts Haim mi fader was,
 " And that ne myghte nogt be hys that of his kunne nogt nas,
 " Therefore Syre vor Godes love, ne let me non mon owe,
 " Bote he abbe an two name warthorou he be y knowe,
 " Damoysele, quoth the king, thou seyst wel in thys cas ;
 " Sr. Roberd le Fitz Haim thy fader's name was,
 " An as fair, name he ssal abbe gyf me hym may byse,
 " Syre Roberd le Fytz Roy ys name ssal be ywis,
 " Syre quoth this mayde tho that ys a vayr name,
 " As wo seyth all hys lyf and of grete fame,
 " Ac wat ssolde hys sone hote thanne, and other that of hym come ;
 " So ne mygte hij hote noght thereof nymeth gome.
 " The king understood that the mayde ne seyde non outrage,
 " And that Glocester was chef of hyre eritage,
 " Damasile, he seyde tho' thy Loverd ssal abbe an name,
 " Vor him and vor hys eyrs, vayr without blame,
 " Vor Roberd Erl of Glocestre hys name ssal be and ys,
 " Vor he ssal be Erl of Glocestre & ys eyrs ywys.
 " Sire quoth the mayde tho wel lyketh me thys,
 " In this fourme ychole that al my things be hys,
 " Thus was Erl of Glocestre vorst ymade there,
 " Ac this Roberd of alle thulke that lange byvore were
 " Thys was enlene Hundredger and in the ger ryght
 " After that our Lorde was in his moder alyght."*

When Robert Earl of Glocester was put in possession of the castle, he was only twenty years old ; and he was one of the most remarkable characters of that age, for superiority of abilities, and a taste for literature. He is thus

* Robert of Glocester's Chronicle, published in 1724, by Thomas Hearne, the Oxford Antiquary.

characterised by a noble historian :—" The Earl of Gloucester had no inconsiderable tincture of learning, and was the patron of all who excelled in it ; qualities rare at all times, in noblemen of his high rank, but particularly in an age when knowledge and valour were thought incompatible ; and not to be able to read was a mark of nobility. This truly great man broke through that cloud of barbarous ignorance, and after the example of his father, Henry I. enlarged his understanding, and humanized his mind, by a commerce with the muses, which he assiduously cultivated, even in courts and camps."*

With these rare endowments and accomplishments, the Earl of Gloucester began his public career. Soon after his marriage he made Bristol his place of residence, rebuilt the castle on a more extensive scale, and fortified it with a strong outer wall, defended with towers, and surrounded by a deep moat, over which there was a passage to the city by a drawbridge. In the extensive square enclosed by this fortification, he erected a magnificent tower or palace of white stone, imported for the purpose from Caen, in Normandy.†

But instead of the usual divisions of the keep or principal tower of ancient castles, the entrance to the palace of the Earl of Gloucester was by a stately arched vestibule, which led to a great hall, where the proprietor entertained his friends and partisans with the dignified hospitality of that age. A suite of superb apartments, furnished for the accommodation of royalty, displayed the taste and opulence of the proprietor ; the garrison was lodged on the ground floor, in spacious rooms, contiguous to the great hall ; and the upper chambers were partly appropriated to the purposes of study or repose, and partly occupied by the ladies, and their female attendants.

In this stately and magnificent pile, the Earl of Gloucester gave laws to his dependants in the vicinity of Bristol, for some time ; and it continued to be his

* Lord Lyttelton's History of the reign of Henry II, vol. 2. p. 58.

† Leland.

favourite residence while he was permitted to enjoy the uninterrupted pleasures of domestic retirement, and the elegant pursuits of literature. His serenity too soon suffered interruption; a civil war between the Empress Maud and King Stephen involved the whole nation in one common calamity; and the Earl of Gloucester, who was the avowed adherent of the fair competitor, was obliged to relinquish the delights of his pleasant castle, for the turbulence and danger of the camp.

During the earl's absence, a violent and lawless body of his partisans, from time to time, made the castle their rendezvous; and being in general men of desperate circumstances, they committed intolerable outrages against the peaceable inhabitants of Bristol. These depredators are thus described by a cotemporary writer. "On one part of the city where it is more exposed, a large castle rises, with high ramparts, a wall, bulwarks and towers, and other contrivances, to prevent the approach of besiegers. In this fortress a multitude of vassals, both horse and foot, are collected, which are terrible, nay, horrible to the beholder. These freebooters, protected by a rich lord, and a very strong castle, ravage this fertile country with impunity.*

* M. S. in the collection of Bishop Lauch.



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BRISTOL is situated on an eminence gradually rising from the banks of the Frome and the Avon, two rivers by which the city is nearly surrounded. This city is partly in Gloucestershire and partly in Somersetshire. It was formerly described as part of the county of Somerset: but in the reign of Edward the Third, it was made a distinct county, dignified with peculiar privileges, and governed by its own municipality.

This ancient city was first fortified by the Romans, and afterwards rebuilt by Alfred the Great, on the original scite; but he improved the fortifications, which he extended on the eastern part, and strengthened with a castle. Bristol then consisted of four principal streets, with four gates,* besides six smaller gates in different parts of the fortification, including that of the castle.

Bristol must have made a considerable progress in population and opulence, prior to the conquest; for in Domesday Book it is rated higher than any town

* According to a plan of the city, taken in 1470, it had four principal gates, with a church or chapel at each; and the high cross in the centre of the city was surrounded by four churches.

in England, except London, York, and Winchester. "Bertune and Bristow paid to the king 110 marks of silver, and the burgesses returned that Bishop G. had 33 marks, and one mark of gold."* The chief magistrate of the city was then called prepositor; and it is probable that the governor of Bristol was denominated mayor many ages prior to its being made a corporation; for we are informed that "Harding, who in the year 1066 was made governor of Bristow, removed the calenderies to the church of All Hallows, which before was at Christ Church. The schools founded by these calenderies for the conversion of Jews in Bristow, were put into the order of the calenderies and the mayor."†

When the Norman invader triumphed over the patriotic English, he parcelled out their possessions among his needy followers. Among other adventurers, Harding, son to the King of Denmark, had distinguished himself, by his superior valour, at the battle of Hastings, and was rewarded for his services by ample possessions in the counties of Gloucester and Somerset. He was also appointed governor of Bristol, and this circumstance is a proof that the city was then esteemed a place of considerable importance.

Harding is the first governor of Bristol recorded in history;‡ for the vague account given by Mr. Barrett, of the Saxon governors who presided here, during the reigns of Alfred and Edward, is unauthorized by any other historian. It appears that Mr. Barrett obtained his information on this subject from an ancient manuscript, said to have been written by Turgotus, an imaginary historian of the twelfth century; but such authorities are unworthy of serious consideration.

In common with other English sea-ports, Bristol undoubtedly advanced in prosperity, immediately after the conquest; for a general communication was then

* Domesday Book, p. 75. It is conjectured that Bishop G. was Geoffry Bishop of Constance.

† Leland, p. 88.

‡ Collinson's History and Antiquities of Somersetshire, p. 275.

opened with the continental nations, and the merchants of this city were consequently enabled to extend their commercial connections. Harding, during his residence in Bristol, contributed to its advancement. He married an English lady, named Lyveda, by whom he had five sons and three daughters, and died in the year 1115, after having governed the city with wisdom and equity during forty-eight years. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Robert Fitzharding, a nobleman who left a lasting memorial of his piety and munificence, by founding the abbey of St. Augustine, in this city.

The exact epoch when Bristol was first 'governed by municipal laws, is unrecorded; but there remains a curious document in the little red book deposited in the archives of St. George's Chapel, which is a satisfactory proof of the existence of a mayor in this city, prior to the year 1100. The memorandum is in old French, of which the following is a translation.

"Memorandum, that on Monday before the feast of All Saints, in the first year of the reign of King Henry the First, after the conquest, the harness of the black scabbard of the sword of the Mayor of Bristow, was weighed in the Guildhall of Bristow, before Thomas Norton, mayor, and Walter Milton the elder, one of the bailiffs, and it weighed twenty-eight ounces and a quarter."* Hence the first municipal officers of Bristol were, in all probability, nominated, when this city was governed by Harding; and this record is an honourable memorial, not only of its antiquity, but its early importance and considerable population.

It has been customary with topographers to lavish panegyric on the object of their description; but Bristol requires no adventitious embellishment to recommend

* Memorandum, que le Lundy presch. denant le fest de towts Seincts, 1 an du reigne le Roy Henri le prim. púys le Conquest prim. le harneys de la scauberthe de le noir espe del ' Maior feust poisir en le Guildhal de Bristruyt, denant Thom. Norton Maire, et Walter Milton leisne a' dongs vu de les Bailifes, et poisa 28½ vnc.

it to our attention; and instead of exploring the gloomy recesses of antiquity, in quest of curiosities not worth the pains of research, or of wasting time in vague and unprofitable conjectures, respecting transactions and manners which have long since passed away, we shall adhere to facts of unquestionable authority, descriptive of the former state of this ancient city, and the gradual advancement to its present dignity and importance, both commercial and political.

The form of ancient Bristol was nearly oval, its boundaries being two confluent rivers, which environed it with a natural defence, except at the eastern quarter. Its situation was airy and pleasant, in the vicinity of the Avon and Frome, to which a subterraneous communication by sewers contributed to the cleanliness of the place, and the health of the inhabitants. The fertile circumjacent country supplied it with the necessaries of life in abundance, while its facility of communication with the sea, and its importance as a frontier town, rendered it an object of political importance.

When Bristol was rebuilt and fortified by Alfred, the wall with which he surrounded it extended along the banks of the two rivers, the channels of which being deepened where requisite, formed an impassable moat, except at one entrance, where a strong castle was built, and surrounded with a deep trench filled with water, to complete the fortification.

The channel of the river Frome formed the principal part of the moat; it passed close to the northern part of the wall, continued its course to St. Nicholas port, where it supplied a mill with water, and afterwards disembogued itself into the Avon. This ancient course of the Frome is proved by several records. Nicholas-street being one of the boundaries of the ancient city, part of the wall is yet discernable in several places. The remains of the old wall, with its battlements, are also perceptible in Leonard's-lane, near St. Giles's Gate, from whence it was continued along Bell-lane to St. John's Gate, and joined the

Tower-wall in Tower-lane. From the Tower the ancient line of fortification extended into Wynch or Wine-street; and at Defence-lane joined the wall which extended from St. Nicholas Gate along the bank of the Avon.

Defence-lane is mentioned in old deeds. It formed a barrier between the castle and the city, to protect the citizens from the assaults of the garrison of that fortress, which was governed by a separate jurisdiction, and consequently not amenable to the municipal laws. This inner wall is said to have been built by the Bishop of Constance, when he reared his standard at Bristol, in favour of Robert Duke of Normandy, brother to William Rufus. The outer wall on this side was built on the bank of the Frome, extending from Frome Gate to Pithay Gate and Newgate, where it joined the outer wall of the castle. From its elevated situation, and its natural and artificial fortifications, this city must have been a place of great strength; and we are informed by a noble historian, that "The Earl of Gloucester so fortified the city of Bristol, as to make it impregnable."*

But this city, happily for the inhabitants, derives its celebrity and splendour from the successful speculations of enterprising merchants, and the cultivation of the useful arts, which adorn civilized society, instead of the false glory attached to military operations. Many interesting events, of a political nature, have indeed occurred within its boundaries; but in every instance, the citizens were injured by the competitors for martial superiority.

Several writers have expatiated on the early commerce of Bristol, particularly De Chesne, who describes it as a place of great traffick in the reign of King Stephen. "Bristol is one of the richest cities of England, receiving merchandise from neighbouring and foreign places, with ships under sail. It is situated in a very fertile part of the kingdom, and one of her most defensible cities; for as we read of Brundusium, a part of the county of Gloucester is here formed

* Lord Lyttelton's History of the Life of King Henry II. vol. 1. p. 312.

in a peninsula by two rivers, which extend on each side, and by their confluence almost environ the city. A strong and rapid tide flows up both these rivers, which ebb into the broad and deep sea, where there is a safe and commodious haven for a thousand ships. The city is so closely environed by the tide, that it seems to swim in the waters, as it appears along the banks of the rivers." Lord Lyttelton, on the authority of William of Malmsbury, says, that in the reign of Henry II. "Bristol was full of ships from Ireland, Norway, and every part of Europe, which brought hither great commerce, and much foreign wealth." Had Malmsbury particularized some of the principal commodities imported, as well as those exported at this period, he would have communicated interesting information, respecting the trade of Bristol; but the general assertions of our ancient writers are mostly hyperbolical, as well as unsatisfactory. In the infancy of British commerce, the ships so pompously mentioned by this historian were probably not larger than our present coasters. What commodities could Ireland or Norway then supply? Naval stores were probably imported from the north of Europe; but the manufactures of Ireland, as well as England, were then but few. The mariners' compass was unknown; a voyage to a remote region must consequently have been extremely hazardous, and an intercourse with distant nations almost impracticable. But whatever commerce England then enjoyed was amply shared by the port of Bristol; hence it must have been a place of considerable opulence in the twelfth century.

The election of Henry the First to the throne of England, in the year 1100, having interrupted the regular succession, that prince endeavoured to establish his popularity by the correction of abuses, and the reformation of manners. During the reign of William Rufus, the English courtiers had assumed illegal authority over the people, whom they treated with intolerable insolence. This petty tyranny was still further aggravated by the infamous sensuality of several young noblemen, who publicly boasted of their success in the seduction of the wives and daughters of the citizens of London.

To remedy these moral and political disorders, King Henry published an edict against all offenders, especially adulterers; several of the nobility, who had been notorious oppressors of the people, were banished from the court; Ranulphus Bishop of Durham, the unpopular minister of the late king, was imprisoned; and those noblemen, who had the temerity to continue their outrages, after the proclamation of the royal mandate, were condemned to suffer death by the hands of the common executioner.

The king also abolished the curfew, and granted a charter to his subjects, by which he confirmed several of the liberties enjoyed by the people during the reign of the Saxon kings, especially Alfred, and Edward the Confessor. This charter, on which the great charter afterwards granted by King John was founded, restored the ancient liberties of the church, and the people; and having been approved by the lords spiritual and temporal, a transcript of it was sent to each county, and lodged in the principal monastery to be occasionally consulted.

Having thus obtained the esteem of the people, the king, under the pretext of his right to the dukedom of Normandy, invaded his brother Robert's dominions with a powerful host, in the year 1107, and at the battle of Tichenbray the English obtained a decisive victory over the Normans, and took possession of the country. Thus by a fortuitous incident, about forty years after the battle of Hastings, which terminated in the conquest of England, the English became conquerors of Normandy. The victor, however, tarnished his glory by inclemency to his brother, who was taken prisoner in the field of battle, and sent over to Cardiff Castle, where he died, after twenty-six years of close confinement.

King Henry, having received the homage of his Norman vassals, returned to England, and soon afterwards ambassadors were sent to the English court

from the emperor Henry the Fifth, demanding the King of England's daughter, Matilda, in marriage. This proposal was received by the king with joy, for his ambition was gratified by such a splendid alliance; the wedding was celebrated by proxy, and the princess, who was then very young, was sent over the following year to her imperial husband, with a numerous retinue, and a dowry suitable to her rank.

The prosperity of the King of England made him unmindful of his charter, and the auspicious commencement of his reign in favour of the liberties of the people. Elated with success, he became presumptuous, and exacted the most exorbitant taxes without remorse. In the year 1120 he had the misfortune to lose his only son, Prince William, who in the seventeenth year of his age, was, with nearly one hundred and forty of the English nobility, lost in a voyage from France to England.

The king convened the vassals of the crown in 1127, and proposed that the Empress Matilda, who had resided at the court of her father since the death of the emperor, should be acknowledged presumptive heir to the crown of England. The members of this assembly gave their unanimous consent, and Stephen, Earl of Boulogne, nephew to the king, was the first who took the oath of allegiance to Matilda. Soon after this ceremony, the princess was married to Geoffrey Plantagenet, Earl of Anjou.

In the year 1135, while the king resided in the castle of Lyons, he was seized with a distemper which proved mortal. When he perceived that the hour of his dissolution approached, he sent for Robert Earl of Gloucester, his favourite son. The dying father earnestly gave it as his last injunction to the earl, that he should assert the right of his sister, Matilda, to the English crown, which he then promised to perform, and afterwards realized, in his brilliant contest with King Stephen.

Twenty-four days after the demise of King Henry, his nephew Stephen Duke of Boulogne, and grandson to William the Conqueror, assumed the sceptre of England, notwithstanding the prior claim of the Empress Matilda, to whom the barons and clergy had formerly sworn allegiance. But although invested with royal authority by the clergy, the pretensions of Stephen met with a bold competitor in Robert Earl of Gloucester, who landed in England in the year 1136, for the purpose of disputing the succession. Soon after his arrival, however, finding with what facility Stephen had ascended the throne, he thought it expedient to temporize, and accordingly took the oath of allegiance to that sovereign, with the stipulation that he should be no longer bound by it, than the king continued to govern the people according to his coronation oath, and his profuse promises to the barons, and the clergy.

But the people in general were unfavourable to their new king, and in the third year of his reign, a general revolt of the barons, and their vassals, prevailed throughout England.* Robert Earl of Gloucester was at the head of the insurgents. He previously avowed himself the partisan of his sister, the Empress Matilda; wrote a letter to Stephen, upbraiding him with the breach of his oath to that princess, and published a manifesto, in which he styled the king an usurper, and formally declared war against him. To this letter Stephen returned no answer, but confiscated the estates of the earl in Gloucestershire, and compelled him to retire to the Continent.

In the year 1138, the Earl of Gloucester returned to England, and took possession of Bristol with great facility, on account of the multitude of his adherents in the city, and surrounding district. At the same time, several noblemen, who were partisans of the empress, took possession of the new castles which had been erected by Stephen for the security of the crown. But

* Malmsbury.

the king was unintimidated by this powerful faction, and at the head of his army marched against the confederates with such promptitude and activity, that he disconcerted their plans, and reduced their fortifications one after another. Hence the Earl of Gloucester had the mortification to find his adherents diminished and dispirited, and found it expedient to retire to the Continent. But this temporary triumph of King Stephen, and the consequent interval of peace enjoyed by the nation, were succeeded by a still more fatal contention between the king and the bishops, which was carried to such a degree of animosity, that the prelates had recourse to arms.

At this period the bishops lived in royal state, in strong castles, defended by a well-appointed garrison. The bishops of Salisbury, Lincoln, and Ely, were particularly remarkable for the magnificence of their household establishment, and numerous retinue; and when they came to the court of their sovereign, they were attended by so formidable a body of armed dependants, that they seemed rather to assume superiority than acknowledge that of their sovereign. Such an assumption of pomp and authority in the clergy, was highly offensive, not only to Stephen, but the nobility in general; and, in consequence of a riot at Oxford, in which the Bishop of Salisbury's followers were the aggressors, the king required that prelate, and his brethren, to deliver up their castles as pledges for their future allegiance. An insurrection was the consequence; but Stephen marched against the insurgents, and soon reduced them to submission. He then made himself master of the principal castles belonging to the bishops, and seized their treasures.

This contest with the bishops, however, soon rendered the king very unpopular, insomuch that he was looked upon by many of his subjects with abhorrence; and their disaffection was strongly fomented by the inferior clergy, who represented this attack upon the property of the church as sacrilegious. The kingdom swarmed with malecontents, who only wanted a leader; and the

empress, availing herself of this juncture, landed in Sussex, accompanied by the Earl of Gloucester, and attended by one hundred and forty knights. This event is very circumstantially recorded by Lord Lyttelton.

“ Adalais, the widow of King Henry I. though she was married again to William de Albiney, Earl of Arundel and of Sussex, retained such an affectionate regard to the memory of her deceased husband, that she kept up a secret friendship with his daughter Matilda, which the Earl of Gloucester now thought they might avail themselves of, to draw them out of the difficulties they were under how to land with safety in England. Arundel Castle was a part of her dower. Stephen had put no garrison into it, out of respect to the lady in whose right it was held; nor did he think of guarding the coast about it with an army or fleet, as he had no suspicion of her corresponding at this time with the empress, because he lived in friendship with her husband. A secret application was therefore made to her, by the Earl of Gloucester and Matilda, to receive them into the castle; which she consenting to, they came into Arundel harbour on the last day of September, in the year eleven hundred and thirty-nine. After a very short abode in the castle, the earl, attended by only twelve of the knights whom he had brought over from Anjou, went from thence in a dark night, and travelled towards Bristol, by unfrequented roads, passing unknown through a country that was more than any other devoted to the king. When he was come about half of his way to that city, Brian Fitz-comte, governor, or constable, of Wallingford Castle, met and escorted him, during the rest of his journey, with a good body of troops. Thus he arrived safe at Bristol: but it appeared no small hazard, to which he exposed the person of Matilda, by leaving her thus shut up in Arundel Castle. Yet he thought he might securely depend upon the faith of the dowager queen, and the great strength of the place, which the enemy could not take without a long siege; so that he hoped to relieve it, before his sister should suffer any extreme inconvenience, and to make himself master of all the west of England, while Stephen was employed in besieging her there. The project was that

of a great man, extraordinary, but well grounded. And Matilda's courage was such, that there is reason to believe she gave her consent to it, with as much confidence as her brother advised it.

“ Intelligence being brought to the king of her landing, he instantly quitted Marlborough, which he was besieging, and with the best of his forces, very expeditiously came before Arundel Castle, hoping to find the Earl of Gloucester there with the empress. But when he was informed that the earl was gone, he pursued him with part of his troops, leaving a sufficient number to block up the castle, and the pursuit being ineffectual, returned to the siege and pressed it vigorously, thinking with good reason that he ought to make that his principal object, his principal enemy being there enclosed. But the Bishop of Winchester advised him to let her go out of the castle and join the Earl of Gloucester, under a notion that he might more easily subdue them together, than while they were separate. Stephen was so weak, as to follow his advice, and having first given her hostages, as well as his oath, for her security, sent her under his own safe conduct to Bristol, escorted by his brother and the Earl of Meulant, his chief minister; a thing hardly credible, if it were not attested by so many historians, that a king should convey a princess, who came to invade and claim his kingdom, out of a castle in which he held her besieged, to another part of the country, where her greatest strength and interest lay, safely and peaceably, under the guard of his own troops! It was indeed a strange effect of that infatuation, which sometimes seems to shew itself in the conduct of a sovereign whom the Providence of God intends to chastise. For even supposing that it would have been necessary for Stephen to go, and make head in the west against the Earl of Gloucester, he might have committed the siege of Arundel Castle, during his absence, to William of Ipres, or at least have blocked up the place so closely, by sea and land, as to hinder Matilda's escape, instead of sending her to head her friends, dispel the anxiety they were in for her safety, and foment the revolt.

“ Matilda having been thus by the folly of Stephen, delivered from her confinement in Arundel Castle, found herself mistress, in a very short time, of a considerable part of the kingdom. The Earl of Gloucester had so fortified the city of Bristol, as to make it impregnable. By the abilities of the Earl of Gloucester, who had all the great qualities that are requisite in the head of a party, and all the virtues that could be consistent with the unhappy necessities of that situation, the cause of the empress was supported.”*

The Earl of Gloucester, whose character and influence gave confidence to the confederates, now assumed the prerogatives of a sovereign, and coined money at Bristol for the payment of his troops.†

Meanwhile Stephen was not inactive, but marched against the insurgents with his characteristic ardour. The decisive battle of Lincoln terminated the contest in favour of the empress, for on this occasion the bravery and skill of the king were counterpoised by the prowess of the Earl of Gloucester, who in person took Stephen prisoner. The victor conducted his royal captive into the presence of the empress, who ungenerously commanded him to be confined in chains in the castle of Bristol. This severity, which was totally incompatible with the magnanimity of the Earl of Gloucester, is only attributable to the pride and malevolence of his sister.

The partisans of the imprisoned king having relinquished a hopeless cause, Matilda, who was every where acknowledged victor, and was received with

* Lord Lyttelton's History of the Life of Henry the Second, vol. 1. p. 250, &c.

† “ There were at this time two armies in the field; one headed by Robert, the other by Eustace, both of which must be paid; and the currency of money at that time was so small, that the prelates, earls, and barons, took upon them to coin their own money, according to Hoveden. This will rationally account for this coin having been struck by Robert Earl of Gloucester. The name Roberdus on this penny seems to be owing to a mistake in punching the letters on the die.”—Vide Observations on a Coin of Robert Earl of Gloucester.—Archæologia, Vol. 4. p. 137.

congratulations even by the citizens of London, now looked forward to the completion of her hopes by a coronation; but the Bishop of Winchester, brother to the captive sovereign, counteracted all her projects. Before this popular and powerful prelate proceeded to open hostilities, he entreated the empress to set his brother at liberty; but she haughtily rejected his request. Entreaties being unavailing, the bishop laid a plot to seize the person of Matilda, of which having received a secret intimation, she escaped precipitately from London, and putting herself at the head of her army, attended by the Earl of Gloucester, and David, King of Scotland, she marched to besiege Winchester. The bishop was at his castle, and perceiving that on the approach of the empress, the inhabitants of Winchester appeared zealous in her cause, he set fire to the city, and reduced it, and twenty churches and a nunnery, to ashes. He then abandoned his castle, which was immediately taken possession of by the Earl of Gloucester; but a reinforcement of Kentish men coming most opportunely to the aid of the bishop, he besieged the castle so closely, that at the expiration of two months, the earl and his troops, reduced almost to famine, resolved to cut their way through the army of the besiegers.

Accordingly they sallied out in good order, with Matilda, and the King of Scotland, in the van, while the Earl of Gloucester commanded the rear. They were immediately attacked by the king's troops, who were frequently repulsed by the bravery and skill of the earl, whose efforts enabled the empress to effect her escape. But the earl was himself taken prisoner; for, intent on the safety of his sister, and the preservation of his troops, he, with characteristic gallantry, marched last through a defile, where, after defending himself with undaunted resolution, he was taken prisoner, and conducted under a strong escort to Rochester.

During the imprisonment of the Earl of Gloucester, he was solicited by the Bishop of Winchester, and the rest of the king's friends, to abandon the cause

of Matilda; but notwithstanding his captivity, and the dangers with which he was surrounded, he continued steadfast in his allegiance to his sister. After the earl had continued six months in prison, Matilda, in order to effect his liberation, consented that King Stephen should be set at liberty. Accordingly, the king was released, after having suffered the rigours of confinement for nine months.

From that period, the king's party obtained the ascendancy, insomuch that the Earl of Gloucester thought it expedient to solicit the aid of the Earl of Anjou in defence of the rights of Matilda, and her son Henry. But that prince, who was engaged in a civil war, could only afford the aid of a few troops, which invaded England in the year 1142, under the command of the Earl of Gloucester, who was accompanied by his nephew, Prince Henry.

Prior to this period, Bristol, the counties lying on the side of the Severn, and that part of Wales inhabited by English settlers, had declared for Matilda; but notwithstanding the influence of the Earl of Gloucester, she was unable to obtain the crown. A civil war ensued, with little interruption, for eight years; and wasted and depopulated the country, without deciding the contest in favour of either competitor. After the return of the Earl of Gloucester from the Continent, the war was continued with little vigour, a few skirmishes, and the siege of several castles, being the whole of the military operations. Meanwhile the earl turned his attention to the education of Prince Henry, who resided at the castle of Bristol during four years, and was placed under the tuition of the best instructors. At the expiration of that time, the Earl of Anjou, being desirous to see his son Henry, who had now completed his education, the prince was accompanied by the Earl of Gloucester to Wareham, where he embarked for the Continent. The earl returned to Bristol, where he died on the 31st of August, 1147, in the 58th year of his age, and was buried in the choir of the priory of St. James, in this city, under a green jasper stone.*

* Dugdale's Monasticon Anglicanum.

Robert Earl of Gloucester was the most accomplished and virtuous nobleman of the age, equally distinguished for his valour, munificence, and piety. When he rebuilt the castle of Bristol of stone which was imported from Normandy, he gave every tenth stone towards the erection of a chapel to the honour of St. Mary, in the priory of St. James, in this city. He also built the castle of Cardiff, and founded Margam Abbey, in Glamorganshire; and he was a benefactor to the monasteries of Neath, Tewkesbury, and Gloucester. His literary knowledge gave him a decisive superiority over his noble cotemporaries, and he communicated a taste for science and literature to his nephew. "The four years which Prince Henry passed in England at Bristol, laid the foundation of all that was afterwards most excellent in him; for his earliest impressions were taken from his uncle, who not only in learning, but in all other perfections, in magnanimity, valour, prudence, and all moral virtues, was the best example that could be proposed to his imitation."* With such endowments and accomplishments, the Earl of Gloucester became so popular in England, that he might readily have obtained the crown, but he gloried in his inviolable allegiance to his sister, from which nothing could make him swerve. In the army, indeed, he exercised the authority of a general; and when a resident of his castle, he ruled as a sovereign. In the year 1141, he appointed Milo, Earl of Hereford, governor of his castle at Bristol; but during the civil war, many outrages were committed with impunity by the garrison, not only upon the defenceless husbandmen and shepherds of the circumjacent country, but even the inhabitants of the town itself. That the possessions of Robert Earl of Gloucester were very extensive, is evident from the fortress erected for the protection of his domain in Wales; and it is recorded, that Robert Fitzharding held of him the manor of Bedminster.†

When King Stephen took possession of the castle of Bristol, after the death of the Earl of Gloucester, he appointed Bartholomew de Curishall governor; but when Henry II. ascended the English throne, in the year 1154, the castle

* Lord Lyttelton's History of the Life of Henry II.

† Tanner's Notitia Monastica.

was restored to William, the eldest son and successor of Robert Earl of Gloucester. The favourite residence of William was at Cardiff Castle, in Glamorganshire, to which he had retired on the death of his father. This castle he possessed by hereditary right from Robert Fitzhamon, who, in the time of William II. had, with twelve knights, and their followers, subdued the circumjacent territory.

Earl William, while he resided in Wales, experienced much annoyance from Yvor, one of his vassals, a man of diminutive stature, but of indefatigable activity and invincible courage. The retreat of Yvor, and his adherents, was in the woody mountains near the castle; and the Earl of Gloucester frequently endeavoured, but in vain, to dislodge him from those sylvan fortifications. Yvor, exasperated at the hostility of the earl, boldly approached the castle of Cardiff with his partisans, and though the battlements were high, and strongly guarded by one hundred and twenty soldiers, and a number of archers, the assailants successfully scaled the walls, surprized and disarmed the troops, and carried off the earl, his countess, and their young son, to the woods. This bold adventurer afterwards released his captives, on receiving the earl's promise that he should have full restitution of his property.*

On the accession of Henry II. to the throne, in the year 1155, he commanded all the castles which had been erected since the death of Henry I. and which were receptacles of rapine, to be demolished, except a few which were retained by the crown, on account of their advantageous situation for the defence of the kingdom, and the protection of the maritime towns. Robert Fitzharding, who was then governor of Bristol, and, by the supplies of money and troops which he afforded to Henry, on his invading England, in the year 1152, had been principally instrumental in the recovery of the throne from the usurper Stephen, was rewarded by his grateful sovereign with the estates of

* Giraldus Cambrensis. Itin. Cambr. lib. 1, cap. 6.

Berkeley, which were confiscated in consequence of the former possessor having fought for Stephen. But Roger, the late proprietor of Berkeley, was permitted to retain his title and estate of Dursley; his being dispossessed of his other hereditary estate, however, excited such a violent hatred and resentment against Fitzharding, that the interference of Stephen and Henry was found requisite to effect the reconciliation of these noblemen. Their amity was further established by a marriage between Maurice, son of Fitzharding, and Alice, a daughter of Lord Dursley; and also between Robert, the heir of Dursley, and Helena, daughter of Robert Earl of Berkeley. The nuptials were solemnized with great magnificence at Bristol, in the presence of Stephen and Henry. Hence Robert Fitzharding was not only governor of Bristol, but Earl of Berkeley; yet his acquisition of power was exercised with great moderation. He was a liberal benefactor to the monastery of St. Augustine, which he founded in Bristol; and he was also founder of the hospital of St. Catherine, at Bedminster, near this city.

Robert Fitzharding, on coming into possession of Berkeley Castle, repaired and enlarged that fortress. He took his seat as peer in the parliament convened in the first year of the reign of Henry II. He married Eve, the daughter of Estmond, and Godwina, sister to William the Conqueror, by whom he had four sons and two daughters. It appears that in the decline of his life he became a devotee; for it is recorded that he was a canon of the abbey of St. Augustine, in Bristol, and when he died, in the year 1170, at the age of seventy-five years, he was interred between the abbot and prior's cell, at the entrance of the choir in that monastery.* His eldest son and successor, Robert, laid aside the name of Harding, and assumed that of Berkeley. He was a benefactor to the hospital of St. Catherine, in Bedminster.

William Earl of Gloucester, who distinguished himself more by his munificence to monasteries and religious establishments, than his military exploits, died in

* Collinson's History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset, p. 276.

the year 1173, and was buried in the abbey of Keynsham. His only son, Robert, died in his father's life-time; his eldest daughter, Matilda, was married to the Earl of Evereux; his second daughter, Amice, was married to the Earl of Hertford; and his third daughter, Avis, was united to John Earl of Moreton,* the youngest son of King Henry II. The king had retained the castle of Bristol, and the honour of Gloucester, during eight years after the demise of William, the late earl; but on the marriage of his son with Avis,† he conferred them on the prince, together with the hundred of Barton Regis, near Bristol. Hence this city, with its castle and domains, came into the possession of a presumptive heir to the crown, and from this period it arose, by a regular gradation, to that enviable opulence and importance, which it now enjoys.

The first royal charter granted to Bristol was by John Earl of Moreton, in the year 1190, and is to the following purport.

The Charter of John Earl of Moreton to his Burgesses of Bristow.

“ John Earl of Moreton to all his men and friends, Frenchmen and Englishmen, Welchmen and Irishmen, now present, and in time to come, greeting. Know ye, that I have granted, and by this my present charter confirmed, to my burgesses of Bristow, dwelling within the walls and without, unto the bounds of the town, that is to say, Sandbrook, Bewel, and Brightnee-bridge, and the well in the way near Addlebury of Knoll,‡ all their free customs, as well, and

* Rapin's History of England.

† “ King John had no issue by her, and so repudiating her, toke to wyfe the Erle of Hereforde's daughter, and reteynid yn his hondes the town and castelle of Brightstowe within the hundred of Berton, lying in Glocestyrshire hard by Brightstowe, as betwixt the forest of Kingeswode and it: and so it hathe synce stil remaynid yn the kinge's handes.”—Leland's Itin, vol. 6. p. 86.

‡ These were the ancient boundaries of the town, which were not enlarged at the perambulation in the reign of Edward III. 1373, when inquisition was made of its ancient liberties, upon the oaths of thirty-six jurors, before magistrates appointed for that purpose. At that period these bounds were ratified by a record in the Court of Chancery, under the great seal, and confirmed by act of parliament.

in a full and free manner as in the time of my predecessors. The liberties which are granted to them are these : that is to say, that no burgess of Bristow may sue or be sued out of the walls of the said town, in any place, except for any pleas of foreign tenements that do not belong to the hundred of the town ; and that they shall be free of murder within the bounds of the town ; and that no burgess shall wage duel, unless he were appealed of the death of any foreigner that was killed in the town, and who was not of the town ; and that no man shall take an inn within the walls by the assent and order of the marshal, against the will of the burgesses. And that they shall be free from toll, lastage, and pontage, and of all other customs, through all my lands and territories. And that none shall be judged and amerced in money, but according to the laws of the hundred, that is to say, by the forfeiture of forty shillings. And that the hundred court of Bristow be kept only once in seven days ; and that in no plea any one be charged with *prevarication*. And that they may lawfully have their lands and tenures, days of appearance and duty, through all my lands, whatsoever shall be due unto them. And that for the lands and tenures within the town, right be done according to the custom of the town. And that for the debts which were made in Bristow, and for the pledges there made, pleas may be there holden in the town. And that if any one, any where, of any land shall take toll of the men of Bristow, if he doth not deliver it again after it shall be demanded to be restored, to the provost, he may take and distrain a ship for the same. And that no foreign merchant shall buy within the town of any stranger hides, corn, or wool, but of the burgesses. And that no foreigner shall have any tavern but in his ship, nor sell cloth to be cut but in the fair. And that no stranger shall tarry in the town with his merchandizes to sell the same, but only forty days. And that no burgess any where else within my land or jurisdiction shall be attached or distrained for any debt, unless he be debtor or surety. And that they may marry themselves, and sons and daughters, and widows, without licence of their lords. And that none of their lords, by reason of their foreign lands, may have the custody or gift of their sons and daughters or widows ; but only of their tenements, which be of their

fee, until they be of age. And that no recognizance be made in the town. And that none shall take tynam in the town, but to the use of the lord of the country, and that according to the custom of the town. And that they may grind their corn wheresoever they will. And they may have all their reasonable guilds in as full manner as they held them in the time of Robert, and William his son, earls of Glocester. And no burgess shall be compelled to take sureties of any man, except himself be willing thereunto, although he be remaining on his ground. And I have also granted to them all their holds, within the walls and without, unto the aforesaid mounds of the town, in houses and woods, in buildings, by the water and elsewhere, wheresoever it shall be, to be holden in free burgage; that is to say, by landgable service, which they shall do within the walls. And I have also granted, that every one of them may amend as much as he can, in making buildings, every where upon the bank and elsewhere, without the damage of the borough and town. And that they may have and possess all lands and void places, which are contained in the said mounds, at their wills to build. Wherefore I will and strictly command, that my said burgesses of Bristow, and their heirs, shall have and hold all those aforesaid liberties and free customs as aforesaid, of me and my heirs, as amply, wholly, peaceably, and honourably, as ever they had the same, when well, and in time of peace, without the hindrance or molestation of any person whatsoever.

“ Witness, Stephen Rid, my chancellor, William de Wennen, Roger de Dlan, Roger de Newborough, Maurice de Berkly, Robert his brother, Harmer Deval, Simon de Marisco, Gilbert Ralph, William de la Feleyse, Master Benedict, Master Peter, and many others at Bristow.”

This important charter is illustrative of the state of laws, commerce, society, and manners, at the remote period when it was granted; yet the reader can receive but little gratification from a retrospect of the almost incredible ignorance and vassalage which then prevailed, not only throughout England, but the nations of Europe in general. When William I. parcelled out this

kingdom to his Norman adventurers, he also gave the inhabitants of the manors as vassals to cultivate the soil. Hence a numerous class of men, called villains, who inhabited the villages, were obliged to work for their lord without reward; they were incapable of acquiring any property by inheritance, industry, or gift, their money, goods, and lands, being seizable at the option of the baron, who was only restrained by the common law from maiming or killing his vassals, or ravishing the female slaves or *nieves*. But another class of men, who were free in their person, obtained a livelihood by working as journeymen at the few trades then known, or as day labourers at agriculture. The majority of the inhabitants of the walled towns, or boroughs,* were, however, the property of some lord; they held their tenements, called *burgage*, at his will, and worked at some trade by his permission, paying him whatever part of the profits of their industry he might think proper to require. The trades at that period were few, and such as contributed to supply the necessities of the community, particularly those of mason, carpenter, smith, baker, butcher, clothier, and taylor; but the conquest of England by the Normans gradually introduced whatever useful or elegant in dress, furniture, or building, was then known on the Continent. Architecture, particularly the ancient gothic style, which gave such an air of grandeur to the churches and monasteries, was also introduced at this period: and various improvements in the art of fortification were adopted in the construction of castles. But the houses of the common people, even in the great towns of England, were inelegant and inconvenient; the repeated hostilities of foreign invaders, and the oppressive exactions of the Norman settlers, impoverished the people; and even their manufactures of linen, woollen, earthen ware, iron, and tin, were suffered to languish, without the cheering influence of royal patronage.

The immunities and privileges conferred by Prince John on Bristol, contributed essentially to its advancement in trade and population. On the

* The meaning of the word borough was originally *a walled town*.

demise of King Henry II. in the year 1189, his son Richard assumed the reins of government. King Richard was surnamed *cœur de lion*, for his invincible courage; and soon after the ceremony of his coronation, made preparations for the crusade; but as he was suspicious that his brother John might seize the crown during his absence, he conferred several favours on him, to secure his grateful fidelity.

In addition to the earldom of Gloucester,* which Prince John already enjoyed, Richard invested him with six earldoms, namely, those of Somerset, Cornwall, Dorset, Nottingham, Derby, and Lancaster. After having thus secured the attachment of his brother, and renewed his alliances with the kings of Scotland and Wales, to preserve the tranquillity of the kingdom during his absence, Richard embarked his troops, and set sail for France, where he was to be joined by King Philip and his army. The crusades, though unsuccessful in the conquest of the Saracens, and their expulsion from Jerusalem, were beneficial to the commercial intercourse of England, not only with Europe, but with Africa and Asia.

The feudal government cherished that passion for military glory, which was productive of such numerous instances of heroism, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Chivalry may indeed be said to have attained the meridian of its glory in the reign of Richard I. but its influence on society and manners, was paramount for ages prior to that period. According to the feudal system, each landed proprietor was a soldier, and bound to follow his lord on horseback when he went to war. Hence the education of young noblemen was entirely military, learning, and the polite arts, being then in their infancy in Europe, and thought derogatory to the dignity of the heroic character. The idea of whatever was magnanimous, generous, and gallant, was attached to knighthood; and consequently

* Rapin informs us that the late Earl of Gloucester, father of Avisia, for reasons unknown, had made John his heir; but this is an error, for King Henry II. doubtless retained the earldom for several years, and afterwards conferred it on his son, as the dowry of the lady Avisia.

the protection of the fair sex, and the redress of injuries, were considered as the indispensable duties of the accomplished knight. Nay, in many instances an appeal to the sword superseded the operation of the laws.

Knighthood was an honorary dignity, which was thought to add lustre to the highest degree of nobility, nay, even to royalty itself; and its influence on the manners of European nations, during three centuries, was so great as to form the characters and manners of the most distinguished individuals. The following account of the nature and purposes of this singular institution, may afford a rational gratification to curiosity.

“ When Alphonso V. King of Portugal, had taken the city of Arzila by assault, from the Moors, he went in great solemnity to the principal mosque, where he prayed for some minutes before a crucifix, which was placed upon the corpse of the Count de Marialva, who had been killed in the action. He then commanded his son, the Infant of Portugal, to kneel down, then drew his sword, and said to the prince, ‘ My son, we have received this day a great favour from Almighty God, who has made us masters of so important a place, and given me so fair an opportunity of conferring on you the honour of knighthood, and arming you with my own hand. But, first to instruct you what the nature of that order is, know my son, that it consists in a close confederacy or union of power and virtue, to establish peace among men, whenever ambition, avarice, or tyranny, trouble states, or injure individuals. For knights are bound to employ their swords on these occasions, in order to dethrone tyrants, and put good men in their place. But they are likewise obliged to keep fidelity to their sovereign, as well as to obey their chiefs in war, and to give them salutary counsels. It is also the duty of a knight to be frank and liberal, and to think nothing his own, but his horse and arms, which he ought to keep for the sake of acquiring honour with them, by using them in the defence of his religion and country, and of those who are unable to defend themselves. For, as the priesthood was instituted for divine service, so was chivalry for the maintenance of religion and

justice. A knight ought to be the husband of widows, the father of orphans, the protector of the poor, and the stay of those who have no other support; and they who do not act thus are unworthy to bear that name. These, my son, are the obligations which the order of knighthood will lay upon you; consider whether you are desirous of it upon these terms.' The prince having expressed his acquiescence, the king asked him if he would promise to perform all those several duties, and make them to be observed, with other rights and customs of the order of knighthood? To which the prince having consented, 'On these conditions,' said the king, 'I make and arm you a knight, in the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;' and at each of these sacred names striking him with his sword on the helmet, he added, 'May God make you as good a knight as this whose body you see before you, pierced in several places, for the service of God, and of his sovereign.' Then kissing him in the forehead, he raised him up with his hand."*

The ceremonies of inauguration in England were somewhat different. It was customary that the person who was to be knighted should receive absolution the evening before; and after having watched all night in a church, he in the morning should offer his sword on the altar, and receive it from the priest, with a benediction. When the honour of knighthood was conferred by the king in person, which was frequently the case, the candidate was bathed, and afterwards, his sword was girded on by his sovereign, who also put on his feet a pair of gilt spurs, and struck him gently with a sword on the neck, head, or shoulders. This solemnity was graced with the songs and music of minstrels, who attended on the knight, and by many other marks of rejoicing and honour.†

Both the defensive and offensive armour of a knight were of superior excellence, and in some instances, of great value. When Geoffry Plantagenet,

* Marmel. Africa. t. ii. l. 4. c. 53.

† Upton de Militari Officio, l. 1. c. 3.

the father of Henry II. received the honour of knighthood, he was armed with a habergeon of double plates, or scollops, of steel, which no arrow or lance could penetrate; his cuishes, or boots of iron, were equally strong. Gilt spurs were put on his feet, a shield was hung on his neck, adorned with lions of gold, and his head was defended with a helmet, which glittered with precious stones, and was so well forged, that no sword could penetrate it; his defensive arms consisted of a lance of ash, armed with the steel of Poitou, and a sword from the royal armory, where it had been laid up for ages, being the workmanship of Galan, who had forged it with his utmost skill.* Thus equipped, and inspired with all the ardour of religious and martial enthusiasm, a knight was truly formidable.

In France, the education given to those who aspired to the honour of knighthood, was well calculated to make them good soldiers. A young gentleman destined to arms, was taken when he was seven years old, out of the hands of the women, and remained a page till fourteen, in the family of a knight; after which he served seven years in the quality of esquire, and then was knighted. After the Conquest of England by William Duke of Normandy, a similar method of education was adopted in this country; for the Norman princes introduced into their courts the manners of the French, with little variation. With the English, fifteen was accounted the lawful age of knighthood.†

According to the laws of chivalry, every knight vowed fidelity to some lady, whose favours he wore in tournaments and battles, and for whose honour he was always prepared to combat. This amatory sentiment was inculcated in their education; and hence the passion of love was an incitement to their valour, while it humanized their manners. Every knight had power to make other knights, wherever he went. During the reign of King Stephen, the Earl of

* Monach. Mariemb. Hist. Guafrid.

† Spelman.

Glocester conferred the honour of knighthood on his brother ; nay, some of our kings themselves have been knighted by their own subjects.*

The institution of knighthood was admirably calculated to cherish generous and exalted sentiments ; and, as a noble historian justly observes, “ From the ninth to the sixteenth century, the brightest virtues which dignified either the history of this nation, or that of any other people in the whole Christian world, were chiefly derived from this source. Had it not been for the spirit of chivalry, the corruption of religion,—the want of all good learning,—the superstition,—the ferocity,—the barbarism of the times, would have extinguished all virtue and sense of humanity, as well as all generous sentiments of honour, in the hearts of the nobility and gentry of Europe : nor would they have been able to resist the military enthusiasm of the Saracens and the Turks, without the aid of another kind of fanaticism, which was excited and nourished in them by means of that spirit.”†

During the continuance of this romantic institution, European armies were principally composed of cavalry ; the infantry, for the most part, were archers, and both the Welsh and English were celebrated for their strength and dexterity in drawing the bow. Besides the heavy cavalry, there were light armed horsemen, who only wore a habergeon and helmet of iron. The defensive armour of the infantry consisted of skull-caps, and light breast-plates or targets of wood.

Tilts and tournaments, for the display of personal dexterity and prowess in the use of arms, were first introduced into Germany by the Emperor Henry, in the tenth century.‡ In the following century, they were established in France

* Henry the Sixth was knighted by the Duke of Bedford ; and Edward the Sixth by the Duke of Somerset.

† Lord Lyttelton's History of the Life of King Henry II. vol. 2. p. 249.

‡ Selden.

and England. They were regulated by a peculiar code of laws, sanctioned by royal authority.

These military exercises were of great use to instruct the nobility in the management of their horses and lances; they also cherished a martial disposition, and an emulation for military glory, in time of peace. Nor were these military amusements confined to the nobility, or even those who had received the honour of knighthood; for we are informed that in the time of Henry II. every Sunday, during lent, the sons of the citizens of London sallied forth in troops, from the gates, mounted on war-horses, and armed with shields and lances, or javelins, the iron of which was taken off; and proceeded to the fields, where they exercised themselves in mock fights, and acts of military contention. On those occasions, many of the young nobility and gentry, who had not been knighted, came from the palace, and engaged in those tournaments. It was also customary for the young citizens, every holiday during summer, to go into the fields and practice archery, wrestling, throwing missile weapons, and other martial sports; and during the festival of Easter, they represented a naval engagement on the river Thames.*

The maritime force of England was very considerable when Richard ascended the throne. The navy was principally composed of galleys, which were long, narrow, and low built, with two rows of oars. The prow was strengthened with a piece of wood covered with iron, which was called a spur, and was designed to pierce the ships of the enemy. Before Richard embarked in that memorable crusade, in which he became so highly distinguished, he augmented his navy with several large galleys; and we are informed that after the conquest of Cyprus, when all his galleys arrived in one of the ports of that island, including five which he had taken from the Cypriots, they amounted to one hundred. Fifty of

* Fitz-Stephen.

these were *triremes*, or gallies of three oars;* and besides these armed vessels, he sailed from Messina with one hundred and fifty large ships, which he used as transports.†

The foreign commerce of England, in the twelfth century, was extensive and lucrative, as is evident from the fact, that when King Richard I. ordered an exact account to be taken of the royal treasure, the amount was about ninety thousand pounds weight in silver and gold. The prelates, and principal nobility, had also much plate, and rich ornaments, in their houses and wardrobes; and the cathedral churches, and those belonging to several of the monasteries, were decorated with crucifixes, shrines, and vessels of gold and silver. As there are no historical records respecting the discovery of mines of gold or silver in England, and those precious metals were very rare in Europe at this period, the balance of trade with other nations must have been greatly in favour of the English. But the articles which were so productive are unknown. We are indeed told by a learned writer, “that in the time of Henry the Second, and Richard the First, this kingdom greatly flourished in the art of manufacturing woollen cloth: but by the troublesome wars in the time of King John, and Henry the Third, and also of Edward the First and Edward the Second, this manufacture was wholly lost, and all our trade ran out in wool, woollfells, and leather, carried out in specie.”‡ The great staple of the nation was, at this early period, very beneficial to the manufacturers; and both the clothing and dying trades were carried on to a considerable extent, in the cities of Bristol, Worcester, Gloucester, and many other towns, which paid fines to King John, “that they might buy and sell dyed cloth, as they were accustomed to do in the time of King Henry the Second.”§ In the twenty-seventh year of the same king’s reign, a licence was given to export corn from Norfolk and Suffolk to Norway, which was undoubtedly paid for in specie. The trade from the

* Spelman.

† Hoveden.

‡ Hale’s Primitive Original of Mankind, p. 161.

§ Madox’s History of the Exchequer.

west of England to every part of Europe, must have been very considerable at this period; for William of Malmsbury expatiates on the wealth of London, and other sea-ports, and the multitude of ships from the different maritime nations of Europe, which, he says, "filled the port of Bristol, and brought thither much foreign wealth." The principal articles imported were foreign wines, which were chiefly brought from France.

Among the exports from Bristol, mentioned in the charter granted by King John, were hides, corn, and wool; a proof that the manufacture of woollen goods was then on the decline. Yet the grant for the incorporation of guilds admits the inference, that there were a considerable number of artificers in this borough, at that period. The article of grain exported was probably the principal merchandise supplied by the fertile counties of Somerset, Wilts, and Gloucester; for it was not till the reign of Edward III. that the woollen manufacture became the staple commodity of the west of England.

On the death of King Richard, who was mortally wounded with an arrow at the siege of Chaluz, in 1199, his brother, Prince John, was crowned at Westminster by the Archbishop of Canterbury,* in the presence of the barons, several of the clergy, and a vast concourse of the people.

* The speech of the archbishop on this occasion is too remarkable to be omitted. "No person can have a right to the crown of this kingdom, unless after humbly invoking God's holy spirit, he be first unanimously elected for his extraordinary virtues, and then solemnly anointed and consecrated. In this we imitate what was practiced with regard to Saul and David, whom God was pleased to set over his people, though neither of them was the son of a king, nor royally descended. The former was chosen for his valour, the latter for his humility and piety; it being God's will that such as were to be clothed with sovereign power, should be distinguished in an eminent manner by their virtues. If, therefore, any one of the family of the late king outshines the rest in noble qualities, we ought to make no scruple to submit ourselves to his authority. I say this in behalf of the noble duke John, here present, brother to our illustrious King Richard, who died without issue. This prince being endowed with many virtues, particularly consummate wisdom, and undaunted courage, we therefore, on account of both his birth and merit, elect him for our sovereign lord, after having humbly invoked the Holy Spirit."

In the second year of his reign, A. D. 1200, he granted the town of Bristol in fee farm to the burgesses, at the annual rent of £245. In the year 1201, when he levied a tax to defray the expence of his expedition to Ireland, the inhabitants of Bristol paid one thousand marks; the men of Redcliff, an equal sum; and the burgesses of Glocester, five hundred marks, which were paid to Englard de Cigoni, the king's treasurer at Bristol. A very unjustifiable act of despotism of this prince is recorded. In 1210, he seized the property of the Jews; and a rich Jew at Bristol, who refused to pay an exorbitant sum, was tortured into compliance, by the persons employed to enforce the mandate of the tyrant.

The three principal events in the reign of King John, were, his war with Philip King of France, who deprived him of all the provinces which his predecessors held in that kingdom; the deprivation of his crown by Pope Innocent III. who restored it on condition of his paying a shameful homage to that pontiff; and his grant of Magna Charta to the barons, at Runnymede, in the year 1215. Hence the reign of this prince, though inglorious, was propitious to the liberties of the people. The most unjustifiable act of King John was the imprisonment of his niece, the Princess Eleanor of Brittany, whom he brought from the Continent, and immured in Bristol Castle in the year 1202. This unfortunate princess was closely confined here during a period of forty years, being guarded by four knights, lest she should have an opportunity of engaging in a clandestine marriage, by which the succession to the crown might afterwards become disputable. Certainly never were knights employed in a service more inconsistent with the laws of chivalry; and in an age, too, when the romantic heroism of knighthood continued in its meridian glory. King John has also been accused of the assassination of Prince Arthur the brother of Eleanor; but no sufficient proofs of the fact have been brought forward, even by his enemies, for his crimination.

An unpopular tax upon sea-ports, in the thirteenth year of his reign, was withdrawn; and this king made several improvements in the civil government of London, Bristol, and several other places. He was the first king who coined sterling money; he also introduced the English laws into Ireland, and granted to the cinque ports their peculiar privileges.

On the demise of King John, in the year 1216, Prince Henry, his eldest son, to whom he left the crown, was but ten years of age; but he found in the Earl of Pembroke a wise, brave, and loyal subject, whose influence induced the barons to espouse his cause. Accordingly, Prince Henry was crowned at Gloucester, on the 28th day of October, 1216; after which the assembly of the barons, who at that time represented the whole nation, chose the Earl of Pembroke guardian to the king, and protector of the realm, or regent of the kingdom, during the minority of the sovereign.

Soon after his coronation, King Henry III. accompanied by his guardian, the Earl of Pembroke, Gallo, the legate, and several noblemen, came to reside in Bristol for security, the army of the disaffected barons, who had opposed his father, being then in the field. The legate exerted his authority to the utmost, in favour of Henry; and excommunicated the barons who were the partisans of Louis, son to the King of France, who claimed the crown of England. Gallo also persuaded eleven English and Welsh bishops, who came to Bristol, to swear fealty to King Henry.

During his residence in this city, in the year 1216, the king authorised the inhabitants to choose a mayor, and two prepositors; and those are the first municipal officers mentioned in the annals of Bristol.

It is recorded, that in the year 1216, King Henry celebrated the festival of Christmas in Bristol; but how long he afterwards continued here, is unknown.

The inhabitants of Bristol had manifested a steady loyalty to King John, in opposition to those barons who favoured the pretensions of Louis; and the unfortunate Eleanor, another competitor for the crown of England, of which she was undoubtedly the hereditary heiress, had been confined in Bristol Castle, as a place of the greatest security. Here she languished, in hopeless imprisonment, during the minority of King Henry the Third; but it was thought expedient that the governor of the castle should annually exhibit the royal captive before the people, to prevent any suspicion of injurious treatment;* a fact which proves that her captivity excited public commiseration.

The revenue of this princess appears to have been the rent of the manor of Melksham, which she bequeathed to the nunnery of Ambrosbury. She died at Bristol Castle, in the year 1240, after a long captivity; her remains were first interred in the priory of St. James, in this city, but afterwards taken up, and entombed in the church of the nunnery abovementioned, according to her dying request. Prior to this period, Louis had been defeated, and compelled to return to the Continent; and the death of the Princess Eleanor was a new subject of triumph to King Henry, who was thus left in peaceable possession of the throne. The title of Eleanor to the crown, which she could never be persuaded to relinquish, amid all the privations of confinement, had been a continual source of apprehension to King Henry, who was so suspicious of the fidelity of his subjects, that the year preceding her demise, he obliged all persons in England, above the age of twelve years, to take an oath of allegiance to his infant son, Edward, as his successor.

As a reward for the fidelity of Ralph de Wilinton, governor of Bristol Castle, he was appointed by the king warden of the forest and chase of Keynsham;

* The profits of the county were granted to William Purton, for the custody of the castles of Bristol and Gloucester, and for the exhibition of Eleanor, the king's cousin, imprisoned at Bristol, through her claim to the crown.—Fosbrook's History of Gloucestershire.

and the burgesses of Bristol were also recompensed for their loyalty, by several royal charters and immunities, particularly the following, granted by their sovereign in the year 1244.

“ Henry, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and Earl of Anjou. Know ye, that we do grant, and by this our charter confirm, for us and our heirs, to the burgesses of Bristol, that they may, out of themselves, choose a coroner. And the burgesses, through the trespass of servants, shall not forfeit their goods. And if any of the burgesses should die within our land or jurisdiction, their goods shall not be forfeited by death, with or without a will. And they shall have their liberties as free as the city of London. And the neglect of usage of privileges shall be no prejudice. And all their liberties shall be by them freely enjoyed. Whoever shall violate any of their privileges, shall forfeit twenty pounds. And we do grant and confirm this charter, as it doth reasonably testify. And moreover, we do grant to the burgesses, for us and our heirs, that they and their successors, burgesses of the said town for ever, shall be free of murrage, stallage, and pannage, throughout England, and the dominion thereunto belonging. And whenever they shall choose their mayor (the time of war excepted) they shall present him to the constable of the castle of Bristol, as he was wont to be at the Exchequer, and thereof shall certify to the treasurer. These being our witnesses,—our best beloved brother, Edmund Earl of Kent, &c.”

This charter was dated in the twenty-eighth year of the reign of King Henry, and confirmed in the fortieth.

By a charter of King Henry, granted in the year 1247, Redcliff was incorporated with Bristol, and subject to its municipal jurisdiction. Several important improvements were soon afterwards realized by the inhabitants, particularly the new quay in the marsh of St. Augustine, and a bridge across the Avon, for a ready communication between Redcliff and Bristol.

Leland, in his Itinerary, gives the following account of these important transactions. "In the year of our Lord 1247 was the trenche made and cut of the river, from Gib Taylor to the Key, by the comonalty as well of Redcliffe syde as of the town of Bristoll; and the same tyme the inhabitants of Redcliffe were combined and incorporated to the aforesaide towne. As for the ground of Saynt Augustin's syde of the river, it was geven and granted to the comonalty of the sayed towne by Sir William Bradstone, then being Abbot of the same Monastery for certayne money thereof payed to him by the comonalty, as it apperithe by writynge thereof made betwigne the mayor and comonalty and the abbote and his brethren."

But among various records, that of Ricaut, in the Mayor's Calender, is of unquestionable authority, and illustrative of the benefits resulting to the inhabitants of Bristol and Redcliff from these improvements.

"1247.—This year the mayor and commonalty of the town of Bristow concluded to build a bridge over the river Avon, with the consent of Redcliff, and the governors of Temple Fee; thereby minding to incorporate them with the town, and so to make of two but one incorporate town. For they passed by boat from St. Thomas's Slip, unto St. Mary le Port, to come to Bristow; for at that time the port was where St. Nicholas Shambles is, and there the shipping did ride, for which cause the church is called the Church of our Lady her Assumption, and the port, St. Mary Port. At that time no water did run down the quay, but with one current did run down the castle, and so to Keynsham's river; for the marsh of St. Augustine's side was one main close, called Center's Close, belonging then to the abbey of St. Augustine.—For their conveying the river from the point called the Gib to the Quay, the mayor and commonalty as well of the Temple side as of the Town of Bristow, bought so much ground as it parted from St. Augustine's side, of Sir William Bradstone, the abbot, for a certain sum of money to him paid, as it appeareth by an old

writing made between him and the mayor with the convent. And then the trench was digged for the bringing the river into the quay. For at that time the fresh water from behind the castle mills, did run down under Froome Gate, and so through Baldwin-street, now so called, and it drived a mill, called Baldwin's Cross Mill; and when the trench to the Quay was finished, the water was stopt at the point against the Redcliff, and all the while the foundation of the arches was laying, and the masons building, the water did run down the bridges of Redcliff and Temple Gates, being made for the same purpose; and at Tower Harris the water was bayed that it could not come down to hinder the building, but kept its current that way; and when the bridge was built, the bays were broken down, and the current did ebb and flow as it formerly did, and then the fresh river which did run by Baldwin's Cross was damped up and made a street. Thus these two towns were incorporated into one, both on Somersetshire side and Gloucestershire side, that whereas they had usually on every Monday a great market at the Stallenge Cross in Redcliff, and in Bristow every Wednesday and Friday, at the High Cross, and it was much trouble for the people to pass from one side to the other, the bridge being built, the markt was kept in High-street, at the High Cross."

In this improvement of the harbour of Bristol, the burgesses were assisted by the inhabitants of Redcliff, by virtue of a writ of mandamus sent to them by King Henry III. to the following purport.

" Henry, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy, Aquitaine, and Earl of Anjou, to all his honest men dwelling in Redcliffe, in the suburb of Bristol, wisheth health. Since our beloved burgesses of Bristol, for the common benefit of the town, and your suburb, have begun a trench or quay in the marsh of St. Augustine, that ships coming to our port of Bristol may more freely and without hindrance come in and go out, which trench indeed they cannot perfect without great charges; we

therefore command you, that since from the improvement of the said port, no small advantage will accrue, not only to those burgesses, but also to you, who are partakers of the same liberties which our said burgesses have in the said town, and are joined with them both in scot and lot, that you lend the same assistance as they do; as it will also be very profitable and useful to you to have the work of the trench completed, according to what shall fall to your share, together with our burgesses; and so effectually that the aforesaid work, which we regard as our own, receive no delay through any defect or negligence in you. Witness myself, at Wyndleshire, 29th April, 24th year of our reign."

According to a memorandum in the great white book, in the city chamber, the expence of making the quay was five thousand pounds, a very considerable sum at that period. But the advantages arising from this improvement of the harbour, caused a rapid increase of commerce and population. When the quay was completed, and the marsh of Bristol divided from that of St. Augustine, several warehouses were erected for the reception of merchandise brought by large vessels. Many of the merchants also built houses near the quay, for their residence. Marsh-street, terminated by a gate and a chapel, dedicated to St. Clement, and Back-street, with a gate and a chapel, were built in a few years after the completion of the quay. These streets, with several intermediate buildings between the Back* and the Quay, were enclosed by a strong wall, with battlements. Prior to the year 1247, the Back was the usual place for landing goods; a custom-house was then erected on the bank of the river, and still remains, adorned with the arms of England in the front.

From this period may be traced the gradual increase of commerce and opulence in this city; the necessity of deepening its harbour for the reception

* Back, or Beck, is the Saxon name of a river.

of large vessels, is a sufficient proof of the prosperous state of foreign trade, while a more general communication with Somersetshire opened by the erection of a bridge across the Avon, was also productive of a sudden accession of prosperity to Bristol.

It has been asserted, that a bridge of wood had been made across the river, prior to the erection of the stone bridge, in 1247; but the record already quoted invalidates the assertion. For it appears that two distinct markets were formerly held, one on each side of the river, in consequence of the difficulty of a passage over it. Bristol-bridge was built when the river was about two hundred feet broad; it consisted of four narrow elliptic arches, supported by three massy pillars, which occupied nearly one hundred feet of the channel. The bridge was only nine feet broad, and this narrow passage was rendered still more incommodious, by the erection of houses, supported by small gothic arches on each side, which gave it the appearance of a lane. But at this early period in the history of the population and commerce of Bristol, few carriages were used in this kingdom, and those comparatively small. Coaches and waggons were then equally unknown.* The saddle horse, and the palfrey for the pomp of a procession, or the purposes of travelling or hunting, and the pack-horse for the conveyance of merchandise, were then adequate to all the purposes of trade or recreation. The population of the country was then comparatively few, and the extent of Bristol itself inconsiderable. The following curious account of a pompous procession of the inhabitants of Bristol over the bridge, when it was first opened for public accommodation, is taken from an ancient manuscript, the authenticity of which has been disputed; but undoubtedly the joyous event was celebrated with great festivity.

“ On Fridaie was the tyme fixed for passing the newe brydge, about the tyme of the tollynge the 10th clock. Master Greggorie Dalbenye, mounted

* Coaches were first introduced into England in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, A. D. 1589.

on a fergreyne horse, enformed maister maior all thyngs were prepared, and two beadles went fyrst streinge fresh stre, next came a manne drest up as follows. Hose of goatskyn, crine part outwards, doublet and waystcoat also, over which a white robe without sleeves, much like an albe, but not so long, reaching but to his lends, a girdle of azure over his left shoulder reached also to his lends, on the ryght, and doubled back to his left, bucklyng with a goulden buckel, dangled to his knee, thereby representyne a Saxon elderman. In his hande he bare a shield, the maistrie of Gille a Brogton, who painted the same, representynge Sainte Warburgh crossing the ford. Then a mickle strong manne in armour carried a huge anlace; after whom came six claryons and six minstrells, who sang the song of Sainte Warburgh; then came master maior, mounted on a white horse dyght with sable trappins wrought about by the nunnes of Sainte Kenna, with gould and silver; his hayr brayded with ribbons, and a chaperon, with the auntient aarms of Brightstowe, fastened on his forehead. Maister maire bare in his hande a goulden rodde, and a congeon squier bare in his hande his helmet waulking by the syde of the horse: then came the eldersmen and citie broders mounted on sable horses, dyght with white trappings and plumes, and scarlet copes and chapaus, haveing thereon sable plumes; after them the preests and freeres, parish mendicants and seculors, some syngyng Sainte Warburgh's song, others soundyng claryons thereto, and others some citrialles.—In thilke manner reechyng the brydge, the manne with the anlace stode on the fyrst top of a mound, yred in the midst of the brydge; than went up the manne with the sheelde, after him the mynstrels and clarions; and then the preests and freeres all in white albs, makyng a most goodlye shewe; the maior and eldersmen standyng around, they sang with the sound of claryons, the song of Sainte Baldwin, which being done, the manne on the top threwe with greete myght his anlace into the see, and the claryons sounded an auntient charge and forlyn: then they sang again the song of Sainte Warburgh, and proceeded up Chryst's Hill to the Cross, where a Latin sermon was preeched by Ralph de Blundeville. And wyth the sound of claryon

theie againe went to the brydge and there dined spendyng the rest of the daie in sports and plaies, the freeres of Saincte Augustin doeyng the plaie of the knyghtes of Bristowe, makyng a great fire on Kynwulph Hill."

King Henry III. by a charter, dated at Woodstock, in the thirty-sixth year of his reign, A. D. 1246, confirmed the charter of King John to the burgesses of Bristol; and he granted them, as an additional privilege, that they should not be molested by any of his wardens of the forest for venison found within the walls of the town. This grant, however, seems to have been rather a matter of courtesy than utility; but it might be considered valuable in an age when the chace was one of the principal amusements of both sovereign and people. About this period stones were set up to mark the boundaries of the corporation.

In the year 1253, King Henry bestowed upon Prince Edward, his son, a grant of Ireland, with the earldom of Chester, the town and castle of Bristol, and all his dominions on the Continent. The king, in consequence of his exactions of property from the inhabitants of London, and other cities, became very unpopular; he also extended his rapacity to the Welch, whom he considered as his own subjects, and compelled to pay tribute; but they soon became impatient, and had recourse to arms, indemnifying themselves by plundering the defenceless English who inhabited the borders. The tyrannic conduct of Henry excited the resentment of the barons, who were indignant at seeing the most considerable posts enjoyed by foreigners. "This," says a candid historian,* "is usually the motive which stirs up the zeal of great men; this is what makes them such mighty sticklers for the good of the public. If their own private interest was not joined to that of the kingdom, in vain would it be expected that the nobles would expose their lives and fortunes in defence of the liberties of an injured people." Among other calamities, the people were afflicted with a dreadful

* Rapin.

famine in the year 1256. Provisions were so scarce at Bristol, that wheat was sold for the exorbitant price of sixteen shillings a bushel; and many of the common people devoured the carcases of dogs.

Before King Henry provoked the barons to open hostilities, he summoned a parliament to meet at Oxford; and apprehensive that the malecontents would make preparations which he could not counteract, he gave them a positive promise that he would join with them in redressing all abuses. On the day appointed, the barons, attended by all that owed them military service, came armed to Oxford. Twenty-four commissioners were elected, twelve of whom were chosen by the king, and twelve by the barons; and Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, was chosen president. These commissioners drew up six articles,* to which the parliament reserved a power to add such others as should be deemed necessary for the good of the state.

King Henry, thus deprived of his prerogatives, was obliged to submit to every thing the governors were pleased to prescribe to him; but Prince Edward was averse to the barons. The prince had raised some foreign troops, under pretence

* The articles were as follows, and afford a memorable proof of the lordly independence and public spirit of the barons of that age.

“ I. That the king should confirm the *Great Charter*, which he had sworn so many times to observe, without any effect.

“ II. That the office of chief justiciary should be given to a person of fit capacity and integrity, that would do justice as well to the poor as the rich, without distinction.

“ III. That the chancellor, treasurer, justices, and other officers and public ministers, should be chosen by the four and twenty.

“ IV. That the custody of the king's castles, and of all strong holds, should be left to the care of the four and twenty, who should entrust them to such as were well affected to the state.

“ V. That it should be death for any person, of what degree or order whatsoever, to oppose, directly or indirectly, what should be enacted by the four and twenty.

“ VI. That the parliament should meet at least once a year, to make such statutes as should be judged necessary for the welfare of the kingdom.”

of employing them against the Welch, who continued to make predatory incursions on the English side of the Severn, and even extended their depredations to the vicinity of Bristol. But Edward's principal motive for assembling troops, was to oppose the barons. Being destitute of money to pay his army, he went to London, and led his armed partisans to the new Temple, which he plundered of ten thousand pounds, which the citizens had deposited in the treasury of the templars. This outrage excited the clamour of the sufferers, but the prince caused the money to be conveyed to Windsor Castle, where he had placed a strong garrison.

A civil war ensued in 1263. King Henry continued confined in the Tower of London, while the barons made themselves masters of Gloucester, Hereford, Bridgnorth, Worcester, and Tewkesbury. Meanwhile Prince Edward was not inactive. He thought it expedient to lay in provisions and military stores, for the use of his garrison in Bristol Castle. On his arrival in Bristol, he issued orders to the inhabitants to furnish the requisite stores at their own expence; but the minds of the people being already irritated against his father, on account of his former exactions, they not only refused compliance, but compelled the prince to retire hastily to his fortress, which they immediately besieged. In this situation, convinced that he could not hold out long, and unwilling to exasperate the populace, he sent for the Bishop of Worcester, who then happened to be in Bristol. During the interview he declared to the prelate, that his intention was to espouse the party of the barons, but he wanted first to try whether he could persuade his father to grant them satisfaction without coming to extremities. This apparently pacific disposition induced the bishop to interfere in the prince's behalf with the besiegers. He represented to them that it was injurious to the peace of the nation to detain the prince at such a juncture, and promised to accompany him to London, for the purpose of mediation. The blockade was immediately raised; Prince Edward passed in safety through a crowd of the armed citizens, who an hour before were in open hostility, and, accompanied by the bishop, set out for London. When the travellers arrived at Egham, however, Prince Edward

set spurs to his horse, and rode full speed to the castle of Windsor; while the bishop, exasperated at his equivocation, proceeded to the metropolis, and complained to the barons, who resolved to besiege the castle immediately.

Prince Edward, finding Windsor Castle unprovided for a siege, resolved to amuse the barons by a negociation, and for that purpose he went to meet the Earl of Leicester, who was advancing with his army towards Windsor. He met that general at Kingston-upon-Thames; but not being able to bring the object of dispute to an amicable termination, the prince was seized by the advice of the Bishop of Worcester, as he was preparing to return to the fortress.*

Prince Edward was afterwards liberated, and during the contest between the king and the barons, distinguished himself by his bravery, particularly at the battle of Evesham, in the year 1265, where he not only gained a complete victory, but had the satisfaction to set the king his father at liberty, who had been a captive fourteen months.† This victory obtained over the barons, was fatal to their power, and the system of feudal government, which had prevailed in England from the time of the conquest. Soon after the battle of Evesham, the victorious Prince Edward besieged and took Bristol Castle, which was then garrisoned by the partisans of the barons. He afterwards fined the inhabitants of Bristol one thousand pounds, as a punishment for their former revolt.

In the year 1272 King Henry died, and his eldest son, Prince Edward, was unanimously chosen by the barons as his successor. Edward was then absent on the Continent; but on his return to England in 1274, he was crowned, and immediately after his coronation, he appointed commissioners to go through the counties, and examine into and punish the misdemeanors of those magistrates who had abused their authority by acts of oppression.

* Mathew of Westminster.

† Rapin.

King Edward, who, during the civil war had suffered many injuries from Llewellyn Prince of Wales, now resolved to prevent him from doing any future mischief. While he was making preparations to invade Wales, four ships belonging to the port of Bristol captured a vessel near the island of Scilly, on board of which was one of the daughters of the late Earl of Leicester, who was contracted to Llewellyn. The prize was particularly acceptable to the King, who thus deprived an enemy of his expected bride, and held in captivity the daughter of his once formidable opponent. The prince demanded his bride, but experienced the mortification of a stern refusal; nothing therefore remained but an appeal to the sword. In the course of the summer of 1277, Edward conquered Wales, and compelled the haughty Llewellyn to submit to a treaty, by which he was obliged to pay fifty thousand pounds, and hold the isle of Anglesey of the crown of England, under the annual tribute of one thousand marks. At the conclusion of the treaty, the king restored the lady to whom Llewellyn was contracted, and did him the honour to assist at his nuptials.

In the year 1285 King Edward came from Wales to Bristol, about the middle of December, and restored to the citizens their charter, which they had forfeited by encroaching upon the rights of the constable of the castle. He also kept his court in this city, and solemnized the festival of Christmas here. During his stay, he held a private council, but no general parliament; and having established his court of chancery in this city, he went with his family to London.

Among other improvements in Bristol, and its vicinity, the parish church of St. Mary Redcliff was founded in the year 1292, by Simon de Burton, an opulent inhabitant, who was afterwards chosen mayor six times. He also erected an alms-house in the Long Row, called Burton's Alms-house, but did not live to finish the building of the church, which was afterwards continued by William Cannings, a rich merchant.

In the year 1305 the king took a tallage of all the cities, boroughs, and towns in England; and on this occasion the burgesses of Bristol paid four hundred pounds into the royal treasury.

Soon after the accession of King Edward II. Gaveston, his favourite, became so unpopular, that the parliament petitioned the king to banish him. Edward consented with great reluctance, and having appointed Gaveston governor of Ireland, he accompanied him to Bristol on his way to that kingdom. The comparative value of money will appear by the prices fixed by royal authority, to the following articles, sold in the markets of this city, in the year 1311. The best corn-fed ox, twenty-four shillings; grass-fed, sixteen shillings; a fat stall-fed cow, twelve shillings; grass-fed, ten shillings; a fat sheep, twenty pence; a shorn sheep, fourteen pence; a fat hog, two years old, three shillings and four pence; a goose, two pence halfpenny; a capon, two pence; a hen, one penny; four pigeons, one penny; and two dozen of eggs, one penny. Such a regulation was certainly arbitrary, and could be attended with no beneficial effect. Indeed at this early period, the necessaries of life were subject to such frequent variations in price, as sufficiently prove the imperfect state of agriculture.

Many concomitant circumstances prevented the industrious exertions of the people. The petty warfare of neighbouring barons; the frequent depredations of robbers, who issued from the forests with the ferocity of wild beasts, and plundered the defenceless villagers; the imperfect administration of the laws, in consequence of the unsettled state of the government, and the frequency of civil wars, in which the young men of the country were sacrificed to the ambition of competitors for regal power, at once dispirited the agriculturist and the manufacturer. At the present happy period, when we are protected in our liberties by established laws, we can scarcely conceive the miserable state of the common people during the feudal system.

In the year 1200 the king took a tally of all the tithes, and
tithes in England; and on this tally the king paid four
hundred pounds into the royal treasury.

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so unpopular, that the parliament petitioned the king to banish him. Edward
consented with great reluctance, and having appointed Gaveston governor of
Ireland, he accompanied him to that island on his way to that kingdom. The
comparative value of money will appear by the prices fixed by royal authority
to the following articles, sold in the market at this time, in the year 1213.
The best corn of wheat, four shillings; barley, three shillings; a fat
calf, four shillings; a fat sheep, twenty
pence; a sheep, twelve pence; a fat pig, five pence; a fat
and four pence; a goose, three pence; a hen, two pence; a
one penny; four pence; one penny; and two shillings of wool, one penny.
Such a regulation was certainly arbitrary, and could be attended with no beneficial
effect. Indeed at this early period, the value of the money was not so much
subject to variations in price, as it is at present, and the regulation of it was
not so much a matter of course, as it is at present.

Many, consequently, circumstances prevented the introduction of the
paper money. The policy of the government was to keep the currency as
tight as possible, and to issue from the treasury as little as possible, and to
the debenture holders; the important consideration of the time, in which
of the distressed state of the government, and the necessity of civil war, in which
the young men of the country were enlisted in the ranks of the king, and
the king, at once, directed the government, and the government, at the
present happy period, when we are so much in our hands, in our hands,
we can easily conceive the miserable state of the common people during the
famine of 1213.

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CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

DURING the short and calamitous reign of Edward II. Bristol was the scene of several important political events. The king, by his injudicious partiality for particular favourites, exasperated the barons; nay, the affection of his queen, Isabella, became alienated. His inglorious and unsuccessful war against the Scots served to render Edward still more unpopular; and the evils of the state were aggravated by a dearth and famine, which prevailed throughout England in 1316, and was so dreadful that the people were ready to devour one another. Even in the west of England, a tract remarkable for fertility, the famine was so intolerable, that we are told "the prisoners in the prison of Bristol did pluck and tear those that were newly brought in, and devoured them half alive."* A prohibition was issued against brewing any sort of beer, upon pain of death; but the ravages of famine were succeeded by those of disease, and an epidemic dysentery was so fatal, that the living were scarcely sufficient to bury the dead.

But even those dreadful national visitations seem to have had no beneficial influence upon the moral conduct of King Edward. His favourite Gaveston,

* M.S. Annals of Bristol.

who in 1312 sought refuge in Scarborough Castle from the vengeance of the confederated barons, had been seized by them and put to death, without even the formality of a trial; but his place at court was soon afterwards occupied by Hugh Spencer, the king's high chamberlain, who with his father, the Earl of Winchester, by adulation obtained an ascendancy over their weak sovereign. The mind of Edward resembled one of the plants known by the name of creepers, which require support; left to himself, he was irresolute and pusillanimous, a sovereign of all others the most inadequate to govern this nation. Queen Isabella, a woman of an imperious mind, was disgusted with the imbecility of her royal consort; and having obtained permission from him to pay a visit to her brother, Charles King of France, she set sail for her native country, accompanied by her son, Prince Edward. The king had consented to her voyage at the suggestion of the Nuncio, who pretended, that her influence with her brother would promote a reconciliation between that sovereign and Edward, who were then making preparations for war. At the court of Paris the infamous Mortimer, who had made his escape from England, is supposed to have renewed his criminal intercourse with Queen Isabella.

During her residence at the court of France, the Queen of England entered into a project to dethrone her husband, and place Prince Edward upon the throne. Intimation of this conspiracy having been communicated to King Edward, he declared war against France in the year 1326; but the tyrannical conduct of the two Spencers, his favourites, increased the popular odium to such a degree against the unhappy sovereign, that very few troops rallied round his standard. In the mean time, Isabella's partisans were active in fomenting the discontents of the people, and preparing them for open rebellion. On the 22d of September, 1326, the queen invaded England, with an army of three thousand men, commanded by John de Hainault, who was permitted, as a particular honour, to style himself the knight of his royal mistress, and wear her favours. This hostile army landed in Suffolk, where the queen's

standards were soon joined by a numerous army raised by the enemies of the Spencers.

At this juncture the unfortunate Edward was entirely deserted by his subjects, and retired to the west of England, accompanied by the Spencers, and a few adherents. On his arrival in Bristol, he was received by the inhabitants with their characteristic loyalty ; but finding that he was unable to raise a sufficient army to meet his enemies in the field, he rashly resolved to abandon his country, and seek an asylum in Ireland. With this intention, he left Hugh Spencer, the elder, Earl of Winchester, with a small garrison to defend the city of Bristol, and embarked from this port for Ireland, attended by a few faithful adherents. But the king was driven back by contrary winds, on the coast of Wales, and compelled to seek refuge in the abbey of Neath. Meanwhile Queen Isabella proceeded by a rapid march, at the head of a well-appointed army, in pursuit of the king.

During the progress of her troops, they committed several depredations on the property of the inhabitants of the tract over which they marched. The Earl of Hainault's followers, who composed part of her army, actually carried away in carts to Bristol all the wheat and oats belonging to the inhabitants of Clingre Hamlet, in Berkeley Hundred, Gloucestershire.* The queen's army besieged Bristol with such vigour, that at the expiration of three days, Spencer was obliged to make an unconditional surrender of the city and castle. The vengeful queen had now an opportunity of punishing the Earl of Winchester for his former presumption. He was ninety years of age, but that consideration did not prevent the revenge of a vindictive female, who gave orders that he should be gibbeted in complete armour. After hanging two days, his body was by her directions taken down, cut in pieces, and given to the dogs, and his

* Smythe's Lives, p. 842.

head exposed on the top of a pole at Winchester. Such was the relentless vengeance of this cruel and adulterous woman.

Queen Isabella continued some days at Bristol, where she issued a proclamation by which the king was summoned to reassume the reins of government, in conformity to the advice of his barons; but as the sovereign did not appear, Prince Edward was declared regent during his father's absence. The younger Spencer was proclaimed a traitor, and a reward of two thousand pounds offered by the queen for his apprehension, in consequence of which he was soon afterwards discovered with the king, at Neath Abbey, where they were both made prisoners by Henry of Lancaster. The royal captive and his favourite were conducted to Monmouth Castle till farther orders; and at a council summoned by Isabella, it was resolved that the Bishop of Hereford should be sent to demand the great seal of the king, that the queen might thus be legally authorised to convene a parliament. But the impatience of this implacable woman to be revenged of her enemies, would not permit her to await the decision of parliament; she hastened to Hereford, where she caused Spencer to be tried, and executed on a gibbet fifty feet high. Three adherents and ministers of the king were likewise sacrificed to the popular hatred.

At the meeting of parliament in 1327, the king was deposed by an unanimous vote, and Prince Edward chosen his successor. Young Edward was accordingly proclaimed king in Westminster Hall. When the news of this rigorous sentence of the parliament against an unfortunate sovereign was communicated to Isabella, that dissembling woman affected to be grieved, and shed tears; the prince, who was then in the fifteenth year of his age, was so much affected on the occasion, that with the tenderness and generosity of a great mind, he solemnly vowed not to accept the crown during his father's life, without his consent. A deputation was therefore sent to Kenelworth Castle, where the deposed sovereign was then confined, to receive his resignation.

The deputation consisted of three bishops, two earls, two barons, two abbots, and Judge Trussel, who was nominated special proxy for the people. When the deputies were introduced to the king, he was dressed in mourning; and an interview with his formidable enemies so completely overpowered his feelings, that he fainted. On his recovery, he was informed of the purport of their visit, and formally resigned the crown, sceptre, and other ensigns of royalty, into their hands. Trussell then renounced his allegiance in the name of the people, in the following words. "I William Trussel, of the parliament and of the whole English nation procurator, do declare in their name, and by their authority, that I revoke and retract the homage which I did you, and from this time forward do deprive you of royal power, and protest never more to obey you as my king."* The high steward then broke his staff, and declared that all the king's officers were discharged from his service. Such were the ceremonies which attended the deposition of the unfortunate Edward II. in the forty-third year of his age, and twentieth of his reign.

On the return of the commissioners from Kenelworth Castle, Prince Edward was proclaimed a second time, under the name of Edward III. and on Candlemas Day, having previously received the order of knighthood, by the hands of the Earl of Lancaster, he was crowned at Westminster by the Archbishop of Canterbury.†

Immediately after the coronation of the young king, twelve regents were nominated by parliament to superintend the affairs of the state, during his minority. His mother, Queen Isabella, did not venture to oppose their authority, but she conducted herself with such address, that none but her creatures had any share in the government. Her minion, Roger Mortimer, was appointed prime minister, and exercised his authority with all the insolence of an elated favourite, to the great disgust of the regents; but such was the influence of the

* Polychron, l. 7. c. 45.

† Speed, p. 596.

queen with the parliament, that she procured a grant of a dowry, which required the appropriation of two-thirds of the revenue of the crown to her use.

Soon after the coronation of Edward III. the tranquillity of England was disturbed by an incursion of the Scots, who, to the number of twenty thousand men, ravaged the English borders. King Edward, who was possessed of prudence uncommon at his time of life, put himself at the head of an army of sixty thousand men, and marched against the invaders, who retreated on his approach, and retired to Scotland. The king then disbanded his army.

During these events, the deposed king continued in close confinement at Kenelworth Castle, where he was treated in a very unbecoming manner. One hundred marks a month were granted by parliament for his maintenance; but although this sum was more than enough for his expenditure, his life was rendered miserable by the inexorable cruelty of his queen, who would not permit him to take the least diversion. He wrote to her from time to time; and in order to deceive the public, with respect to the real situation of the royal captive, she not only answered his letters, but sent him presents of linen, and other articles of dress, to induce the people to believe that she was actuated by compassion for her unfortunate husband.

At length, Henry of Lancaster, who had the custody of the deposed king, daily relented, and carried his compassion so far, that he expressed an inclination to aid him in his escape from confinement. The earl, who was naturally resolute and generous, was also incited to befriend his prisoner in consequence of the indignation which he felt at the irregular behaviour of the queen, and the odious arrogance of her favourite, Mortimer. Isabella was alarmed at some sentiments which escaped the Earl of Lancaster, and, apprehensive of the restoration of her husband, she secretly concerted a plan with Mortimer for the destruction of the ill-fated Edward. Accordingly, they entrusted the captive to two knights, who

were their creatures, with orders to remove him from Kenelworth to Berkeley Castle. He was first carried to Corfe Castle, and thence to the castle of Bristol, where he continued for some time. At length it was discovered that some of the citizens of Bristol had formed a design to liberate the royal captive, and assist him in making his escape beyond sea; and he was, for greater security, removed to Berkeley Castle.

During his journey from Bristol to Berkeley, his brutal conductors made him suffer the greatest indignities. It is even asserted that they caused him to be shaved in the open fields with cold water taken from a ditch. It appears to have been the intention of Isabella, and the infamous Mortimer, to have shortened his life by those reiterated fatigues and vexations; but the excellence of his constitution having frustrated this design, they resolved to proceed by a shorter method. For this purpose, it is said that Adam Olerton, Bishop of Hereford, one of the queen's ministers, sent orders for the assassination of the captive, in a letter written in Latin, in which, according to the different punctuation, the keepers to whom it was addressed were commanded to murder Edward, or to refrain from that crime. The regicides well knew how to construe the meaning of this equivocal mandate, and hastening to his apartment, they put him to death, by forcing a red hot iron into his bowels. The cries of the unhappy sufferer were heard at a distance from the castle, and the murderers, in order to conceal this execrable deed, sent for some of the inhabitants of Bristol and Gloucester, who examining the body, and finding no signs of violence, gave their verdict that he died a natural death. This account, attested by such respectable witnesses, was circulated throughout the kingdom, to prevent any suspicion of the murder. The assassination of the deposed king was committed on the 21st of September, 1327;* his body was interred in the Abbey-Church at Gloucester, without any funeral pomp; but the king his son afterwards ordered a magnificent tomb to be erected to his memory, in that cathedral.

* Burns's History of Edward III.

The murderers of Edward II. did not long enjoy their triumph over their unfortunate victim. In the year 1328, on the demise of Charles the Fair, King of France, Philip of Valois, cousin-german to the king, assumed the crown; and in April, 1329, summoned Edward III. of England to do homage for Guienne and Ponthieu. Edward reluctantly complied, and soon after his return from France, he began to be suspicious of his mother's conduct, in consequence of the secret intimations of his friends. The king was reminded of the sudden death of his father,—the decapitation of the Earl of Kent his uncle, in consequence of the enmity of Isabella, and her favourite;—and the extravagant dowry of the queen, which she profusely expended for the gratification of Mortimer, whose pride since his elevation to the earldom of March, was intolerable. Struck with abhorrence at their wickedness, the king resolved to bring his mother, and her minion, to condign punishment; and to accomplish his design, pitched upon the time parliament was to meet at Nottingham. On the arrival of Isabella, and her court, at that town, she made the castle her residence, where she lived in the most sumptuous style with the Earl of March, who was attended by a train of one hundred and eighty knights.

King Edward was content with more humble accommodations; he came to Nottingham attended by a small retinue of faithful adherents, and lodged in the town. Soon after his arrival, the king surprized and made captive the Earl of March, who lived with his royal paramour in the utmost magnificence, and was probably unsuspecting of the approaching hour of retributive justice. The circumstances of the seizure of Mortimer are truly curious, as they are detailed by an ancient annalist. “There was a parliament holden at Nottingham, where Roger Mortimer was in such glorie and honour, that it was without all comparison. No man durst name him anie other than Earle of March: a greater rout of men waited at his heeles, than on the kinge's person: he would suffer the kinge to rise to him, and would walke with the kinge equally, step by step, and cheeke by cheeke, never preferring the kinge, but would goe foremost himself with his officers. Which things troubled much the kinge's friends, to

wit, William Mentacute, and others, who for the safegarde of the kinge, sware themselves to be true to his person, and drew unto them Robert de Holland, who had of long time beene keeper of the castle, to whom all secret corners of the same were knowne. There upon a certain night, the kinge lying without the castle, both he and his friends were brought by torch-light through a secret way under ground, beginning far off from the sayde castle, till they came even to the queene's chamber, which they by chance found open: they therefore being armed with naked swords in their hands, went forwards, leaving the kinge, also armed, without the doore of the chamber, least that his mother should espie him: they which entered in slew immediately two of the attendants. From thence they went towarde the queene mother, whom they found with the Earle of March readie to have gone to bedde: and having taken the sayde earle, they ledde him out into the hall, after whom the queene followed, crying, '*Bel filz, bel filz, ayes pitie de gentil Mortimer:*' 'Good sonne, good sonne, take pittie upon gentle Mortimer;' for she suspected that her sonne was there, though she saw him not."* But notwithstanding the entreaties of an abandoned woman, the gallant Mortimer was carried out of the castle the same way the king came in, and immediately sent under a strong guard to the Tower of London.

After this event the king dissolved the parliament, which he considered too much devoted to the interests of his mother and the Earl of March, and convened another by proclamation. In his speech to the new parliament, the king complained, in general terms, of the conduct of the queen and Mortimer, —declared that it was his intention, with the concurrence of his people, to assume the reins of government, although yet in his minority, and that he would exert himself to the utmost, to correct abuses in the administration of public affairs. To this proposal the parliament readily consented, and the first use the king made of his emancipation from the thraldom of his mother, was the reduction of

* Stow's Annals, 1329.

her dowry to one hundred pounds a year. He also confined her in the castle of Rising, in Norfolk; and thus she was most equitably doomed to suffer imprisonment for the rest of her life. The partner of her crimes, the fallen Mortimer, was impeached by the parliament, and condemned to be executed at Tyburn, in the most ignominious manner.

King Edward having thus taken upon himself the administration of public affairs, the people looked forward with lively expectation to the glory and prosperity which afterwards distinguished his reign. The king had been married in the year 1327, to Phillipa of Hainault; and in 1331, the birth of a son confirmed his happiness. The prince was called Edward, afterwards distinguished by the name of the Black Prince, a name renowned in the annals of chivalry.

The ambition of Edward now prompted him to invade Scotland, and after reiterated victories, he subjugated that kingdom. He afterwards turned his thoughts to the conquest of France; and having strengthened his interest on the Continent, by alliances with several princes, he in the year 1337 raised one of the finest armies that had ever been seen in England. As he had offered his protection to the Flemings, who were apprehensive of being oppressed by Philip King of France, he sent part of his troops to their assistance. On the arrival of the English forces, they defeated the army of the Earl of Flanders, who had espoused the cause of Philip, and in a short time compelled his adherents to submit.

During his military preparations, King Edward summoned a parliament, the principal business of which was to make laws for the encouragement and regulation of the woollen manufacture in England. A general intercourse now existed between this country and the maritime states of Europe, particularly Genoa, Spain, France, Flanders, and Norway. Of this trade, Bristol and Exeter possessed a very considerable proportion; but when Edward III. ascended

the throne, our principal exports consisted of grain, tin, and wool. In the year 1332, the king granted a charter to the burgesses of Bristol, confirming the charters of his predecessors, Henry III. Edward II. and King John. He also confirmed the municipal laws digested by the magistracy for the government of the town.

The inhabitants of Bristol also received several marks of royal favour from this prince, who was principally instrumental in the establishment of a profitable manufacture among them. His genius was indeed alike calculated to promote the useful arts among his people, or to shine in the field. He had observed during his journies on the Continent, the successful industry of the French and Flemish manufacturers of woollen cloth, and therefore resolved to re-establish that beneficial trade in his native country. But as the art of manufacturing woollen cloths was but imperfectly known in England, he thought it expedient to encourage skilful workmen from Flanders, for the instruction of his English subjects. The circumstances of this important event are detailed in a very entertaining manner, by an authentic historian.

“ The king and state began now to grow sensible of the great gain the Netherlands got by our English wooll, in memory whereof the Duke of Burgundy, not long after, instituted the order of the Golden Fleece, wherein indeed the fleece was our's, the golden their's, so vast their emolument by the trade of clothing. Our king* therefore resolved, if possible, to reduce the trade to his own country, who as yet were ignorant of that art, as knowing no more what to do with their wool than the sheep that weare it, as to any artificial and curious drapery, their best clothes then being no better than freezes, such their coarseness for want of skill in their making. But soon after followed a great alteration, and we shall enlarge ourselves in the manner thereof.

* Edward the Third.

“ The intercourse being great betwixt the English and the Netherlands, (increased of late since King Edward married the daughter of the Earl of Hainault,) unsuspected emissaries were employed by our king with those countries, who wrought themselves into familiarity with such Dutchmen as were absolute masters of their trade, but not masters of themselves, as either journeymen or apprentices. These bemoaned the slavishnesse of these poore servants, whom their masters used rather like Heathens than Christians, yea, rather like horses than men ; early up and late in bed, and all day hard work, and harder fare (a few herrings and mouldy cheese) and all to enrich the churles their masters, without any profit unto themselves.

“ But oh ! how happy should they be if they would but come over into England, bringing their mystery with them, which would provide their welcome in all places. Here they should feed on fat beef and mutton, till nothing but their fulness should stint their stomachs ; yea, they should feed on the labour of their own hands, enjoying a proportionable profit of their pains to themselves : their beds should be good, and their bed-fellows better, seeing the richest yeomen in England would not disdain to marry their daughters unto them ; and such the English beauties, that the most curious foreigners could not but commend them.

“ Liberty is a lesson quickly conned by heart, men having a principle within themselves to prompt them in case they forget it. Perswaded with the premises, many Dutch servants leave their masters, and make over for England. Their departure thence (being pickt here and there) made no sensible vacuity, but their meeting here altogether amounted to a considerable fulness. With themselves they brought over their trade and their tools, namely, such which could not (as yet) be so conveniently made in England.

“ Happy the yeoman's house, into which one of these Dutchmen did enter, bringing industry and wealth along with them ;—such who came in strangers

within doors, soon after went out bridegrooms, and returned sons-in-law, having married the daughters of their landlords, who first entertained them; yea, those yeomen in whose houses they harboured, soon proceeded gentlemen, gaining great estates to themselves, arms and worship to their estates.

“ The king having gotten this treasury of foreigners, thought not fit to continue them all in one place, lest on discontent they might embrace a general resolution to return, but bestowed them thorow all parts of the land, that clothing thereby might be better dispersed. This new generation of Dutch was now sprinkled every where, so that England (in relation I mean to her own counties) may bespeak these inmates in the language of the poet,

‘ Quæ regis in terris vestri non plena laboris;’

though generally (when left to their own choice) they preferred a maritime habitation.

EAST.

- 1 Norfolk, Norwich, fustians.
- 2 Suffolk, Sydbury, bayes.
- 3 Essex, Colchester, sayes and surges.
- 4 Kent, Kentish broadcloths.

WEST.

- 1 Devonshire, kersies.
- 2 Gloucestershire, cloth.
- 3 Worcestershire, ditto.
- 4 Wales, Welch frizes.

NORTH.

- 1 Westmoreland, Kentish cloth.
- 2 Lancashire, Manchester cotton.
- 3 Yorkshire, Halifax clothes.
- 4

SOUTH.

- 1 Somersetshire, Taunton serges.
- 2 Hampshire, cloth.
- 3 Berkshire, ditto.
- 4 Sussex, ditto.

“ I am informed that a prime Dutch clothmaker in Gloucestershire, had the sirname of Web given him by King Edward there; a family still famous for their manufacture. Observe we here, that mid-England, Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire, and Cambridge, having most of wool, have least of clothing therein.

“ Here the Dutchmen found fuller’s earth, a precious treasure, whereof England hath (if not more) better than all Christendom besides; a great

commodity of the quorum towards making good cloth ; so that nature may seem to point out our land for the staple of drapery, if the idlenesse of her inhabitants be not the only hinderance thereof. This fuller's earth is clean, contrary to our jesuites, who are needlesse drugges, yet still staying here, though daily commanded to depart, whilst fuller's earth, a precious ware, is daily scowred hence, though by law forbidden to be transported.

“ And now was the English wool improved to the highest profit, passing through so many hands, every one having a fleece of the fleece, *sorters, kembers, carders, spinsters, weavers, fullers, diers, pressers, packers* ; and these manufactures have been heightened to a higher perfection since the cruelty of the Duke of Alva drove over more Dutch into England. But enough of this subject, which let none condemn for a deviation from Church History ; first, because it could not grieve me to goe a little out of the way, if the way be good, as this digression is for the credit and profit of our country ; secondly, it reductively belongeth to the Church History, seeing many poore people both young and old, formerly charging the parishes, were hereby enabled to maintain themselves.”*

The woollen manufacture thus established under the royal patronage, became a productive source of national industry and wealth ; but it was pursued with peculiar success in the west of England, where it still continues to be brought to the highest state of perfection. Not only the inland, but the maritime towns shared this lucrative trade ; Bristol, from its situation, was peculiarly favourable to the manufacturer, by affording him a ready market for his goods ; and it is a singular fact, that a particular fabric of woollen cloth owes its name to a native of this city. In the year 1340, soon after the revival of the trade in England, a citizen of Bristol, named Thomas Blanket, and several other inhabitants of this city, set up looms in their own houses, for weaving those woollen cloths from him called blankets.†

* Fuller's Church History, p. 110, 111, 112.

† Bark's Chronicle.

The progress of King Edward on the Continent, which so essentially contributed to the establishment of the woollen, and various other manufactures, and a general commercial intercourse with France, and its dependencies, was also conducive to the glory of England. In the spring of the year 1339, he sailed from England with a fleet of one hundred and fifty ships of war, with a well-appointed army on board, and after a prosperous voyage, landed at Antwerp, to form a junction with his continental allies. But although his ambassadors had concluded alliances in his name, with several princes, yet it required much time and exertion to concentrate their forces. The commencement of the campaign being thus retarded for some months, Edward went to Cologne, where he held a conference with the emperor, and was nominated vicar of the empire in the most public manner, in the market-place of that city, in the presence of all the principal nobility and clergy of Germany. King Edward afterwards went to Ghent, where he granted the cities of Flanders, which had entered into the league, several privileges, for the facilitation of their trade with England. Thus, like an enlightened statesman, the king employed his time and influence alternately, in promoting the commerce, and exalting the glory of his country.

In the month of September, King Edward advanced, at the head of forty thousand men, to Cambray, where he was informed that Philip was advancing with a formidable army to oppose his progress. He immediately passed the river Scheld with his army, and a herald arrived with a challenge from his competitor, on condition that the plain should be sufficiently extensive for the operations of the two armies. Edward, with his characteristic decision, immediately accepted the challenge, and left it to Philip to appoint the time and place. But while both armies were making preparations for this momentous contest, Philip received a letter from Robert King of Naples, a famous astrologer of that age, who foretold his defeat, and disheartened him so much, that he retired with precipitation.

Edward being thus disappointed in his expectation of conquest, returned with his army to Flanders, where he assumed the title of King of France, and quartered the arms of England with those of that kingdom, with the motto, *Dieu et mon droit*. But his claim to the crown of France, in consequence of his mother being sister to the late king, who died without issue, was condemned by the salique law. On his return to England in February, 1340, he summoned a parliament, which granted him a considerable subsidy, obtained from him the confirmation of Magna Charta, and his promise that the title of King of France, which he used in the public acts, should have no influence on the constitution of England.

The king had indeed sufficiently demonstrated his zeal for the prosperity of England, by the encouragement which he held forth for the promotion of manufactures and commerce; and the paucity of records, respecting the state of agriculture and the useful arts, at this period, is to be ascribed to the general neglect of letters which prevailed throughout Europe. Heroism was then the chief passport to distinction, and literature was neglected, nay despised by the warriors of the age. The art of killing was studied with more success than the art of healing; and while a valiant knight, armed cap-a-pee, was eager to destroy, the care of the wounded and sick was commonly left to women.

During the reign of Henry II. English manufactures had been encouraged, and even learning held in some estimation; but national prosperity suffered a severe depression in the turbulent reign of Stephen. The revival of commerce in the time of Henry III. and Edward I. has already been mentioned, and the increasing trade of Bristol demonstrated, by an account of the improvements made in the town and harbour during the thirteenth century. But the real state of foreign and domestic traffick in this sea-port, at that time, is now unknown; and it doubtless suffered much injury and interruption from the civil war in the time of Edward II. It was reserved for the genius of his son

and successor, to exalt the military, naval, and commercial glory of the English nation, to a degree of enviable superiority which has continued with little interruption to the present day.

In the year 1340, King Edward made great preparations for another expedition against France; and having increased his fleet to three hundred ships of war, and augmented his army, he embarked his troops about midsummer, and steered for Flanders, where a powerful French fleet, consisting of four hundred sail, waited to oppose him at Sluys. Edward heard this intelligence with joy, and resolved to fight his way through the enemy's fleet, notwithstanding its superiority. He met the French fleet on the coast of Flanders, and began the engagement with a vigour that presaged victory. After a conflict of eleven hours, the French were totally defeated, and their whole fleet destroyed, or taken, except thirty ships which escaped. This memorable engagement was the first in which the English distinguished themselves by their naval superiority over the French, and the first in which the King of England commanded his fleet in person. The victorious Edward afterwards landed his troops without opposition, and, joined by the forces of his allies, he marched to besiege Tournay, with an army of one hundred and fifty thousand men. His competitor, King Philip, advanced with a much stronger army to the relief of the city; but the two rivals were prevented from coming to a general engagement, by the mediation of Joanna de Valois, mother-in-law to King Edward, and sister to King Philip. By her persuasions they consented to sign a truce of nine months, which was afterwards prolonged two years, by the interference of the pope.

Edward returned to England much mortified at the unsuccessful termination of the campaign, and looked forward with eager anticipation to the recommencement of hostilities. The renewal of a war with Scotland engaged his attention during 1341, and the following year, which terminated in a truce of two years. In the parliament convened in 1343, the king created Edward, his

eldest son, Prince of Wales, and invested him with that principality by an open crown on his head, and a ring on his finger. The same year he ordered a magnificent tournament to be held at Windsor, to which all knights, both native and foreign, were invited, and entertained with the utmost politeness and liberality.

Bristol was at this time a sea-port of great and increasing opulence and importance, and, next to London, distinguished for the alacrity with which its inhabitants contributed to the exigencies of the state. To its shipping and seamen the victorious Edward was, in a great measure, indebted for the defeat and destruction of the French fleet; and the liberal immunities which that prince afterwards conferred on the inhabitants, proved that he was not forgetful of their public services. Its peculiar advantages, both as a maritime town, and a place where the woollen manufacture was successfully pursued, induced several foreign individuals to settle here; but with this increase of population and opulence, there was also a consequent corruption of public morals. For the better regulation of the community, the mayor, and forty-eight of the principal inhabitants, in the year 1345 employed William de Colford,* the recorder, to transcribe the ordinances and customs of the town in a regular series, with such additional bye-laws as were rendered expedient by the state of society. Among the new regulations it was ordered that no person afflicted with the leprosy should be permitted to reside within the liberties of the town, nor any harlot to remain within its walls. That no prostitute should appear in the streets, or even within the bars of St. James's Priory, without having their head covered; and that if such women were found residing in Bristol, the doors and windows of the house which they inhabited should be taken away by the mayor's officers, or the constable of the ward, and kept till the harlots were removed. Such just severities against incontinence, while they demonstrate the vigilance of the

* This is the first recorder mentioned in the annals of Bristol.

municipality for the preservation of decency and morality, forms a striking contrast to the profligacy of modern manners, when chastity is a kind of by-word in the mouths of worthless sensualists.

In 1347, King Edward embarked in that memorable expedition against France, which has been the favourite theme of all English historians, and where, at the battle of Cressy, the Prince of Wales, though only in his sixteenth year, immortalized his name by his valour and magnanimity. It is recorded, that when the king congratulated his son on the victory, the prince fell on his knees, and asked his father's blessing, according to the custom of the English at that period. Such was the inconsistent morality of chivalry, that the very hands which but a moment before had been employed in the destruction of human beings, were raised with submissive and reverential awe, to implore the parental benediction.

From Cressy, Edward marched to Calais, a town which was strongly fortified, and from its situation opposite the coast of England, was considered by the victor as a desirable acquisition, which would enable him the more readily to land his troops in France.

But the English hero found Calais no easy conquest; he therefore besieged it with vigour, and to prevent supplies from being brought by sea to the garrison, he sent to England for a fleet of seven hundred ships, which completely blockaded the harbour. The different sea-ports of England furnished a number of ships to aid the royal navy on this occasion; and the following is an accurate statement of the shipping and mariners which they supplied.*

* Vide Roll of the fleet of Edward III. at the siege of Calais in 1347, in the Cottonian Library.

	SHIPS.	MARINERS.
London.....	25.....	662
Bristol.....	22.....	608
Weymouth.....	20.....	264
Pool.....	4.....	94
Lime.....	4.....	62
Wareham.....	3.....	59
Seton.....	2.....	25

The near approach made by Bristol to London, both in the number of ships and seamen, at this period, is a sufficient demonstration of its maritime prosperity; and the subsequent immunities conferred on this city by King Edward, afford an honourable memorial of the loyalty of the inhabitants, and the gratitude of their sovereign. It must, however, be a subject of regret, that so few documents are in existence respecting the trade of Bristol, in its early state; for the most entertaining, as well as instructive kind of history, is that of the progress of a community from barbarism and indigence, to wealth, civilization, and aggrandizement.

The garrison of Calais, after a brave resistance during a siege of a year, was compelled at length by famine to open their gates to the conqueror. Edward, in order to secure the future possession of the town, forced all the inhabitants to evacuate it, to make room for an English colony. He afterwards consented to a truce of a year with his competitor, and returned to England in 1347, in triumph.

On his return, he was received with the congratulations of the people, who admired his brilliant talents, and almost idolized the heroism of his illustrious son, the Black Prince. England now enjoyed tranquillity; an invasion of the Scots, under their King David, in the absence of Edward, had been repelled

by the English, under Queen Phillipa, who defeated the invaders, and made their king captive. At this auspicious epoch, England stood high in the estimation of the civilized world. The important victories achieved by her army and navy, over a nation that had been considered the most powerful in Europe, and in an age when military puissance was considered the highest virtue, commanded the admiration and respect of the other continental states. At the same time, the judicious commercial treaties made by King Edward with the other maritime nations of Europe, contributed essentially to a more intimate intercourse, and the establishment of a beneficial traffick between them and his native country. The manufactures which had been revived in England, under the fostering patronage of this sovereign, continued to increase in a steady and rapid progression, which naturally had a powerful influence on the increase of population, that true source of national wealth and grandeur; the agriculturist, alike secure from foreign depredation and domestic fraud, brought the produce of his farm to a higher degree of perfection, than had hitherto been known in this country; while a ready market for his commodities, particularly grain and wool, crowned his industrious exertions with merited prosperity. In the principal sea-ports and manufacturing towns, especially London and Bristol, the raw materials were manufactured, and exported to distant nations; while the most valuable productions of foreign climes contributed to the gratification and embellishment of civilized society.

But the history of all nations has proved, that the continuance of prosperity is productive of moral evil. The English nation became presumptuous and dissolute; nay, sensuality was so universally prevalent, that we are informed the women, laying aside their modesty, seemed to glory in the loss of their chastity. They frequented the tournaments, dressed like knights, with swords by their sides, and mounted on steeds adorned with costly trappings. The excesses of the men were no less scandalous and corrupt. But their career of dissipation was suddenly interrupted by a terrible visitation.

In 1348, the plague which had afflicted Asia, and part of the continent of Europe, at length reached France. Pursuing its tremendous progress, it passed over into England, where it destroyed more than one half of the population. The people near the sea-coast in Dorsetshire and Devonshire, were first afflicted, in the month of January, and it soon afterwards reached Bristol, where it raged to such a degree, that the living were scarcely able to bury the dead. This terrible visitant began its devastations in the centre of the city, and so destructive was its progress, that the healthful population of Bristol, which at the commencement of the pestilential contagion, consisted of several thousands, was reduced to a few individuals. It is recorded that the city became so desolate, that grass grew several inches high in High-street and Broad-street, then the principal thoroughfare. To add to the misery of the unhappy sufferers, "the Gloucestershire men would not suffer the Bristow men to have any access to them." Thus realizing the afflictive description of a similar calamity, given by the poet.

" ————— Mute the voice of joy,
 " And hush'd the clamour of the busy world.
 " Empty the streets, with uncouth verdure clad;
 " Into the worst of desarts sudden turn'd
 " The cheerful haunt of men: unless escap'd
 " From the doom'd house, where matchless horror reigns,
 " Shut up by barbarous fear, the smitten wretch,
 " With frenzy wild, breaks loose; and, loud to heaven
 " Screaming, the dreadful policy arraigns,
 " Inhuman and unwise. The sullen door,
 " Yet uninfected, on its cautious hinge
 " Fearing to turn, abhors society:
 " Dependants, friends, relations, love himself,
 " Savag'd by woe, forget the tender tie,
 " The sweet engagement of the feeling heart.
 " But vain their selfish care: the circling sky,
 " The wide enliv'ning air is full of fate;
 " And, struck by turns, in solitary pangs

" They fall, unblest, untended, and unmourn'd,
 " Thus o'er the prostrate city black Despair
 " Extends her raven wing: while, to complete
 " The scene of desolation, stretch'd around,
 " *The grim guards stand, denying all retreat,*
 " And give the flying wretch a better death."

But human precautions were unavailing; the pestilence was not to be arrested in its progress, and Gloucester, Oxford, and London, languished beneath its fatal contagion. The common people, alarmed at the approach of death, became penitent, and even the most profligate were terrified into a reformation of manners; but the pomp, splendour, and gaiety of the court of Edward, suffered no diminution. In April, 1349, when the pestilence raged in its highest violence, he instituted the Order of the Garter, which was celebrated at Windsor with the utmost pageantry and festivity, notwithstanding the calamitous situation of the people in general: a circumstance by no means honourable to the humanity of the sovereign. But in the days of chivalry, knights and persons of distinction only were thought worthy of estimation; while the laborious classes, not yet fully emancipated from feudal vassalage, were considered as an inferior species by their imperious masters.

When the pestilence subsided, the temporary penitence of the survivors was succeeded by incredible excesses. The inhabitants of the principal towns, being few in number, found in the former possessions of the victims of disease a sudden accession of opulence and superabundance of necessaries, which precluded the necessity of industrious effort. Forgetful of the terrible calamity from which they had so recently escaped, they became dissolute, revelled in excess, married and discarded their wives at pleasure, and indulged in idleness. " They persuaded themselves that henceforth they should never need to till the earth, work, builde houses, plant vines, or doe ought else that appertayned unto humane life: having, as they supposed, more store of foode and all other necessaries

left unto them then they could spende, whilst they shoulde live, and believing likewise that they were nowe secure, the fury of God's justice being past. Whereuppon God sent a great and universall famine ; the cattle, for want of men to look to them, wandering about the fields at random, and perishing among hedges and ditches; and vast quantities of corn being lost for want of hands to gather it in."*

The complete establishment of the woollen manufacture in England, appears to have been a favourite object of King Edward III. and in the year 1362, the superiority of the woollen cloth manufactured in Bristol, over the productions of the Flemish looms, induced that prince to order the staple of wool to be transferred from Flanders, and established in this city. From that period the woollen became the staple manufacture of England, and it has proved a rich and productive source of national wealth.

Among the most remarkable improvements in the architecture of Bristol, may be mentioned Redcliff Church. It had been founded in 1292, by Simon de Burton ; the building was continued in 1369, by William Cannings, and was finished by his grandson, the celebrated William Cannings, an eminent merchant, in the reign of King Henry VI.

On the 8th of August, 1372, the king rewarded the loyalty of the inhabitants of Bristol, by granting them a charter which conferred peculiar immunities. In this charter the king expressed his willingness to promote the prosperity of the town, as a reward for the attachment and loyalty of the burgesses, and their good service by their ships and otherwise, done in time past. For a fine of six hundred marks paid by the corporation, his majesty granted the town to be separated from Gloucestershire and Somersetshire, and to be

* Knighton.

henceforth a county of itself; to have one sheriff out of three returned into chancery, to be chosen by the king, who is to be escheator. That the sheriff shall hold his court the first Monday in every month; and the mayor to hold his court at the customary time. That the mayor, after his election, shall take the municipal oath before his predecessor, in the Guildhall; and it shall not be requisite for the new mayor to be presented before the constable of the castle for his acquiescence, in the nomination of that magistrate; that the mayor and sheriff are to hear and determine the several offences committed within the liberties of the corporation, without the interference of any other magistrate. That the mayor shall have power to enroll deeds of lands, tenements, &c. within the town of Bristol, in the same manner as is practised in chancery, with power to prove bequests of lands, &c. in the said town, and to put the legacies in execution. That the corporation of Bristol shall send two burgesses to parliament as their representatives; and in any case of difficulty, the mayor and sheriff shall choose forty honest men, who together shall be empowered to make bye-laws. and to raise taxes for the necessity or advantage of the town. All disturbers of the public tranquillity to be punishable by the mayor and sheriff. All former liberties and charters are also confirmed by this charter. Witnesses, William Archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and others. Dated at Wodestock, the 8th of August, the forty-seventh of Edward III. The king also granted a commission, empowering twelve men of Gloucestershire, twelve of Somersetshire, and twelve of Bristol, by perambulation to fix by verdict the boundaries of the town, as described in the charter of King John.

This comprehensive charter was a proof of the high estimation in which the king held the loyalty and public services of the inhabitants of Bristol. That the shipping and mariners belonging to this sea-port had materially contributed to the success of his majesty's arms, must be evident from the tenor of the charter; the erection of Bristol into an independent county, was indeed a peculiar demonstration of royal favour; the investiture of the municipal officers with more

extensive powers for its civil government; and the privilege of sending two representatives to the senate of the nation, justifies the assertion, that the population and wealth of this ancient city, must have been very considerable, even at this early period.

As a memorial of gratitude to their beneficent sovereign, the corporation of Bristol, in 1373, erected a new high cross, on the scite of an ancient cross in High-street. It was adorned with rich gothic ornaments; the statues of King John, Henry III. and Edward III. were placed in niches; and the statue of Edward IV. another royal benefactor to the city, was afterwards placed in a vacant niche, in the year 1461.

The death of Edward, the Black Prince, in 1376, to the universal regret of the English nation, was followed by that of King Edward himself, who died at his palace at Sheen, or Richmond, in the year 1377, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and fifty-first of his reign.

During the long reign of this illustrious prince, the people of England made a considerable progress in trade, manufactures, and civilization. Edward was remarkable for all those brilliant qualities that constitute a great character. He was brave, just, and patriotic; a warm friend to merit, a respecter of the laws and liberties of the realm, and a patron of learning. Chaucer, the father of English poetry, was an inmate of his court; and Gower, another English writer of merit, enriched the literature of his country at this auspicious period. But in the reign of Richard II. the successor of his magnanimous grandfather, the nation was again involved in all the evils attendant upon the measures of an arbitrary sovereign. At length Richard, after intolerable exactions and confiscations, was opposed by a confederacy of the barons, who compelled him to banish his favourites.

In the year 1389, St. John's Church, in Bristol, was founded by Mr. Walter Frampton, a rich merchant. This beneficent individual also bequeathed sixty-two tenements to be sold, and the price divided into three parts; one-third to be given to industrious young people on the day of their marriage; one-third to the relief of the poor, and the residue to be laid out in the repair of the high ways.

In 1398 King Richard levied an army for the subjugation of the revolters in Ireland; and having left the regency of the kingdom to the Duke of York, his uncle, he set sail, and on the 31st of May landed at Waterford, marched to Dublin, and obtained several victories over the rebels. During his progress in Ireland, however, a conspiracy was formed against him in England, and the Duke of Hereford, his cousin, whom he had unjustly banished into France the preceding year, having received intelligence that the nation was ripe for a revolt, embarked with the Archbishop of Canterbury, and about eighty armed partisans; and having sailed for some time along the coast of England, he was at length encouraged to land, by the alacrity with which the people took up arms, when informed of his approach. Accordingly, he landed at Ravenspur, in Yorkshire, where he assumed the title of Duke of Lancaster, and published a manifesto, expressive of his having had recourse to arms merely to obtain redress for the injustice with which he had been treated by the king. Multitudes, inflamed with anger against the tyranny of Richard, hastened to the banners of the Duke of Lancaster, whose army in a short time amounted to sixty thousand men. With this formidable host he marched without opposition to London, where he was received in triumph.

In the mean time, the regent having made some ineffectual attempts to raise an army, the Earl of Wiltshire, and the rest of the ministry, abandoned him, and retired to Bristol Castle. But as soon as the Duke of Lancaster had secured the allegiance of the citizens of London, he marched to Bristol,

where the gates were opened to him with joy. He then commanded the castle to be assaulted ; it was resolutely defended by the adherents of the ministry, but after a vigorous siege of four days, the besieged were obliged to surrender at discretion. The popular rage against the Earl of Wiltshire, and his companions, was so violent, that the duke, in order to secure his own popularity, commanded these ministers of an arbitrary sovereign to be sacrificed to the vengeance of the people. Accordingly, to appease the public wrath, the Earl of Wiltshire, Sir John Busby, and Sir Henry Green, were beheaded at the High Cross in Bristol, and soon afterwards the whole kingdom submitted to the Duke of Lancaster, who compelled Richard to resign his crown, and was himself proclaimed, and crowned on the 30th of September, 1399, by the name of Henry IV.



CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

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CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

FROM the accession of Henry IV. in 1399, to the deposition of Henry VI. in 1461, a period of sixty-two years, Bristol appears to have enjoyed the advantages of commerce with little interruption. The trade and manufactures of the kingdom in general continued to prosper, in consequence of the excellent regulations established by Edward III. and his successor, Henry IV. was in some degree actuated by similar patriotism. The first instance of his notice of Bristol, was his confirmation to the church of St. James of the lands of Esseley, the fair of Bristol in Whitsuntide week, and the tythe of several mills, which had formerly been conferred by William Earl of Gloucester.

By a statute enacted in the 4th year of the reign of Henry IV. it was ordained that all ships laden with merchandise, entering the realm, or passing out of the same, should be discharged or laden in some great port, and not in any creek, or small river. And by a proclamation issued in the sixteenth year of the reign of Henry V. all officers were commanded to see this act strictly put in execution. This royal edict was greatly in favour of the principal seaports of England, and soon after it was published, the magistrates of Bristol, jealous of any encroachment on their traffick, presented a petition to

parliament, complaining of the injury to the revenue in consequence of vessels unloading their cargoes at other ports and creeks in the Bristol channel, and at Chepstow, and other places in Wales. King Henry IV. also granted a charter to the mayor and commonalty of Bristol, exempting them from the power and jurisdiction of the admiralty of England, in consideration of their liberality to their sovereign. This charter is to the following purport. "Considering the many notable services which very many merchants, burgesses of our town of Bristol, have done for us, and our famous progenitors, in many ways, with their ships and voyages, at their own great charges and expence; as also for the grateful sense which we have recently found in the mayor and commonalty of the said town, in freely giving us £200. in our necessities, for the more readily expediting certain arduous affairs of our kingdom; and also since many of the said burgesses and merchants have been grievously vexed and disturbed by the lieutenants and other officers of our admiralty of England, to their great loss and inconvenience. We therefore, of our special grace, mere motion, and certain knowledge, have granted for us and our heirs, to the mayor and commonalty, and their heirs, that the said town, &c. shall for ever be free from the jurisdiction, &c. of the said admiralty, &c."

In 1441 William Cannings, mayor for that year, repaired the church of St. Mary Redcliff, which had been built by his grandfather; but in the following year the steeple of that beautiful edifice was demolished by lightning.

King Henry VI. came to Bristol in the year 1446, and conferred a new charter on the burgesses, by which he granted the town "to them and their successors, during the term of sixty years, to commence at the end of twenty years. "He also granted to the mayor and commonalty of Bristol, during the said term of sixty years, certain liberties, &c. under a certain form, on condition of their yielding and paying yearly to the king, and his heirs, at the

expiration of the said twenty years, during the said term of sixty years, £102. 15s. 6d. ; at the feast of Easter and St. Michael the Archangel, by equal portions, to the abbot of Tewkesbury, £14. 10s. ; to the prior of St. James's of Bristol, and his successor for the time being, for the annual rent of the mill of the said town, £3. ; to the constable of the castle of Bristol, and his officers for the time being, that is to say, to the porter of the gate, and watchmen of the castle, and to the forester of King's-wood, £39. 14s. 6d. to be paid during the aforesaid term of sixty years.

“ The king also granted all fines, forfeitures, &c. in as full a manner as if he had retained the town, so that the mayor and commonalty were empowered to levy, and receive and retain all goods forfeited, to the use and profit of themselves and their successors. They were also to have the court of view or frank pledge, &c. (the escheat of lands and tenements in times to come being always excepted.) All the beforementioned privileges, liberties, &c. within the said town, and its precincts, he fully and wholly granted to the mayor and commonalty, on their yielding and paying £102. 15s. 6d. in the manner aforesaid.”

Queen Margaret, the consort of Henry VI. honoured Bristol with a visit in 1456 ; but we have no record of the procession of the burgesses, and other public demonstrations of loyalty on that occasion. Such an account would have been grateful to curiosity, as illustrative of the manners of the people at that period.

In March, 1461, Henry VI. was deposed by the partisans of the house of York ; and Edward, Earl of March, the eldest son of the Duke of York, was elected King of England, by a council of all the bishops, noblemen, gentlemen, and magistrates, in London and its vicinity. On the day after his election, Edward went in procession to St. Paul's, and was afterwards conducted

to Westminster-Hall, where he sat in the coronation chair, with the sceptre of St. Edward in his hand. He there received the homage of the lords, afterwards proceeded to Westminster Abbey, and was placed in the chair as king, while *Te Deum* was sung. Next day he was proclaimed at London, by the name of Edward IV.*

Soon after his coronation, King Edward proceeded through different parts of England, for the purpose of encouraging his friends, and repressing the partisans of the House of Lancaster, whom he punished with great severity. In the course of his progress he came to Bristol, in September, and was present at the execution of Sir Baldwin Fulford, and his two companions, Bright and Hesant. They had been imprisoned for some time in Bristol-Castle, in consequence of Sir Baldwin having given his bond to Henry VI. that he would take away the life of the Earl of Warwick, who then plotted the dethronement of the king, or lose his own head. King Edward, with the sanguinary vengeance which was one of the characteristics predominant in

*SPEECH OF EDWARD IV. TO HIS PARLIAMENT, A. D. 1461.

"James Strangways, and ye that be comyn for the common of this my Lond, for the true hertes and tender considerations that ye have had to my right and title, that Y. and my Auncestres, have had unto the Corune of this Reame, the which from us have been longe tyme witholde; and now, thanked be Almyghty God, of whos grace groweth all Victory, by youre true hertes and grete assistens Y am restored unto that that is my right and title; wherefore Y thanke you as hertely as Y can. Also for the tender and true hertes that ye have shewed unto me, in that that ye have tenderly had in remembraunce, the correction of the horrible murdre, and cruell deth of my Lord, my Fader, my Brother Rutland, and my Cosyn of Salysbury, and other, Y thanke you right hertely: and Y shall be unto you, with the grace of Almyghty God, as good and gracious Soverayn Lord, as ever was eny of my noble Progenitours to their Subgettes and Liegemen. And for the feithfull and lovyng hertes, and also the grete labours that ye have born and susteyned toward me, in the recovering of my seid right and title which Y nowe possesse, Y thanke you with all my herte: and yf Y had eny better good to reward you withall then my body, ye shuld have it, they which shall alwey be redy for your defence, never sparyng nor lettyng for noo jeopardie; praying you all of youre herty assistens and good contynuaunce, as Y shall be unto you youre verey rightwisse and lovyng Liege Lord."—Parl. Roll, vol. 5. p. 487.

the fifteenth century, commanded the knight and his accomplices to be beheaded, and he afterwards departed from Bristol on the same day.

More than a century had now elapsed since the discovery of the loadstone, and the invention of the mariner's compass. This important acquisition stimulated the enterprise of adventurous merchants; the intercourse of the civilized nations of the globe was materially facilitated, and the general benefits of commerce more widely diffused. The numerous and extensive privileges bestowed on Bristol by different sovereigns, gave this city a decided superiority over every sea-port in England, except London; and the prosperity of the merchants was further promoted by the public spirit of several noblemen, and other principal proprietors of lands, who liberally supplied the manufacturers and traders with wool, grain, lead, tin, timber, and other productions of the soil; and also lent industrious tradesmen money to enable them to pursue their business with success. Such was the beneficial influence of the royal patronage of Edward III. to the commerce of his country. During the fourteenth century, the merchants of Bristol were so successful, that several of them who had commenced business as factors to the landholders, were enabled to trade upon their own capital, and realize immense fortunes.

Nor was the wealth of those fortunate individuals mispent. They left lasting memorials of their piety and philanthropy, by the erection of edifices appropriated to the public worship of the Deity; and the endowment of hospitals and alms-houses for the mitigation of pain, and the accommodation of indigence. At the same time the corporation in general manifested their public spirit, by the erection of new buildings, and the general improvement of the town.

A most important and satisfactory document, respecting the merchants and shipping of the port of Bristol, in the fifteenth century, has been preserved from

oblivion by Mr. Nasmith, who, with indefatigable patience, decyphered and transcribed the Itinerary of William Botoner, commonly called William of Worcester, which was preserved in the library of Benet College, Cambridge.

According to the records of William of Worcester, the celebrated William Cannings was the most opulent merchant of Bristol at this period. He employed eight hundred men, during eight years, in the following ships.

	TONS.
The Mary and John, burthen.....	900
The Mary Redcliff.....	500
The Mary Canyngs.....	400
The Katherine of Boston.....	223
The Margaret of Tylney.....	200
The Mary Bat.....	200
The Katherine.....	140
The Little Nicholas.....	140
A ship of Ireland.....	100
The Galliot.....	50
Total.....	2853

Ten merchantmen, of such considerable tonnage, and manned by so great a number of seamen, is a sufficient demonstration of the extensive foreign commerce carried on by one Bristol merchant; and Botoner superadds the names and tonnage of shipping belonging to other merchants of this port, in 1480. Among those particularized are the following.

	TONS.
The John, of.....	511
The Mary Grace.....	300
The ———.....	360
The George.....	200

	TCNS.
The Kateryn.....	180
The Mary Bryd.....	100
The Christofer.....	90
The Mary Shernman.....	54
The Leonard.....	50
The Mary of Bristow.....	—
The George.....	—

He also observes that Thomas Strange had twelve ships, and John Godeman

During the mayoralty of William Cannings, in the year 1466, the following ordinances were established for the regulation of merchants, according to custom from time immemorial.

“ 1. The mayor and council, fifteen days after Michaelmas, were to call a council, and choose a person that had been mayor or sheriff, to be master of the society of merchants, and to choose two merchants for wardens, and two beadles, who were to officiate as brokers, and be attendant during a year upon the masters and wardens, &c.

“ 2. The master and society to have the chapel, and the draught chamber at Spicer's-hall, to assemble in, paying twenty shillings a year.

“ 3. All merchants to attend, if in town, upon summons, or to pay one pound of wax to the master and society.

“ 4. All rules for selling to strangers of any of the *four merchandizes*, to be kept on pain of twenty shillings for every default: one half to be paid to the society, and the other to the corporation chamber.

“ 5. No merchant to sell goods to any stranger under the regulated price, under a penalty of twenty shillings, to be disposed of as abovementioned.

“ 6. If any merchant be in distress, he must apply to the wardens or beadles, declaring the same; and if they provide not a remedy in three days, then the merchant burgess shall be set at liberty to dispose of any of his four merchandizes at his pleasure.”

By such prudent regulations did the merchants of Bristol steadily pursue their commercial plans, which generally were crowned with success, and laid the foundation of the present opulence of their successors.

The following description of this ancient city, as it appeared in 1470, is recorded by a native;* and a comparison of what it then was, with its present improved state, will doubtless afford gratification to the native citizen, and admirer of topography.

“ Near the High-Crosse four weyes meet, viz. Hygh Strete, Bradstrete, Wynchstrete, and St. Collas-Strete. At Seynt Callas-yate, in the north syde of the yate meten acrossse wyse IIII weyes, whych ben ye shamelys and Seynt Nicholas Strete. At the sout side of Seynt Collas yate meten twey chyff weyes, the chieff brygge upon four grete arches of ten vethym yn hyth, and the fayre chappelle upon the fifth arch, and the second way havynge the space of a tryangle goyng to Bak by Seynt Nicholas Chyrch.

“ Item, at the begynnyng of the Bakk, there the fyrst gryse called a Slypp, ben twey weyes, the fyrst wey ys the seyde sleye of *** yerdes long, goyng

* William Botoner.

to the water called Avyn-water to wesh clothes, and to entre ynto the vessels and shyppes that comen to the seyde Bak; and the second wey entryth yn Baldwyne-strete.

“ At the crosse yn Baldwyne-strete been four crosse weys metyng one way goyng ys a grete wyde way goyng to Bafft-strete, ye second waye goyng northward by a hygh grese called a steyr of 32 steppes ynto Seynt Collas-strete; the other tweyn metyng wayes at the seyde cross of Baldwyne-strete. At the south syde of Seynt Johnys ys yate meten also 4 crosse weyes, whych one chief way ys Brad-strete. the second ys Toure-strete bye Seynt Johnys Chyrch, goyng streyt to Wynch-strete, and ys but a streyt way goyng by the old Towe walle and the old Towe yate called blynd yate, streyt by the anntient fyrst yate called Pyttey-yate uppon the Lylle entryng ynto Wynch-strete, called Castel-strete; the third wey ys Seynt Laurens-strete goyng from Seynt Johnys gate into Smalle-strete. The fourth wey through the sayde yate of Seynt John goyng ynto Cristmas-strete, called Knyf-smyth-strete.

“ In the north syde of Seynt Johyns-yate ys a 3 triangle ways, one way goyng right to Cristmasse-strete warde. The second wey goth ryghest by the woult of Seynt Johnys Chyrch goynt ynto Gropecounte-lane to Monken-brigge a pryson plase sometyme. The third wey goyng a crosse wey to the key by the lower wey of Seynt Laurens, and by the old Temple yewys where be grete vowts under the hiest walle of Bristow, and the old Chyrch of Seynt Gylys was bylded over the vowtes yn the way goyng to Seynt Laurens Laane ynto Small-strete.

“ At Seynt Leornard yate yn the east syde meten wyth me the yate 4 quadryvalle wayes, as Corn-strete in the est parte, the second wey toward the north is Seynt Leonard way goyng from ye chyrch streyt into Small-strete; the 3d way goth esterly from Seynt Leonard Chyrch ynto Seynt Collas-strete.

“ The yate of Seynt Leonard under the seyde chyrch crosseth two ways, the south-east way ys Baldwyne-strete goong to the Bakk; the second way ys called Pylle-strete, those of old days runne the water called Frome by Baldwyne-strete to the Bakk, fallynge into Avyn-water, and whych Pylle-strete gooth streyt north by the old custom-house to the key, where ys a grate space lyke to a large tryangle, and in the myddel of the seyde tryangle ys a fayre Tour of frestone bylded.

“ Item, yn the myddys of Pyle-strete, toward the new chyrch toure of Seynt Stevyn’s metyn 4 ways dyversly at the entree of Seynt Stevyn’s chyrch-yrde at the style or lytille yate; the first way westward ys a large and a long way called Mersh-strete, there many merchautes and also maryners dwellin.

“ At the seyde chyrch style ys a lane goyng in the south syde of Seynt Stevyn’s Chyrch, goyng by the chyrch-yrde to the kay by old Leycester dore yn the north syde of the toure of the chyrch by the new doore to the seyde kay.

“ Item, at the end of the seyde Pylle-strete, by the seyde lane that returned by the begynnyng of the seyde fyrst lane ys another laane, that goth evyn ryght by the este ende of Seynt Stevyn Chyrch under the hygh auter, and so contynewyth the seyde laane to the seyde kay northly.

“ Item, out of that laane that goth by the est eende of Seynt Stevyn Chyrch returnyth another laane from the north syde of Seynt Peter Chyrch by the west dore of the seyde chyrch, turnyng to aforesaid fyrst laane so entryng to the kay.

“ At New Gate in the west front of yt. wythynne Bristow, there meten two large weys, and the norther wey ys called Towr-strete, aliter

Wynch-strete, and so goth by the old yate of the toune, about one hundred and twenty stepps yn length to the Hygh Crosse ward, where the old toune wall stode."

During the sanguinary competition between the Houses of York and Lancaster, Bristol enjoyed comparative tranquillity; for while several other cities of England were ravaged by the partisans of the white rose and the red, the manufacturers and merchants of this port continued their lucrative pursuits with prosperous activity. We have already seen that the majority of the inhabitants of Bristol were attached to the cause of King Edward IV. and in the year 1470, the Duke of Somerset marched with his army from this city to Tewkesbury, where a decisive victory obtained by Queen Margaret and Prince Henry, secured the crown to Edward.

The unrelenting severity of Edward against the partisans of the House of Lancaster, continued with little relaxation; he appears to have been of a cruel disposition, faithless to his engagements, and delighting in the sacrifice of his enemies. Malignant individuals availed themselves of this characteristic of their sovereign; and, among other instances, it is recorded, that in 1478, Thomas Norton, Esq. a resident of Bristol, accused Mr. William Spencer, mayor, of high treason. He was immediately imprisoned, and continued in confinement thirteen days; but on investigation, the accuser being unable to substantiate his charge, Mr. Spencer was set at liberty. Another instance of personal malignity occurred in Bristol in the year 1479. Mr. Robert Strange, who had formerly been mayor, was accused by Robert Marks of coining money, and exporting it to the Continent, for the use of the Earl of Richmond. On this charge Mr. Strange was confined in the Tower of London during seven or eight weeks; but when the truth was known, and his innocence proved, his accuser was sent to Bristol, where he was hanged, drawn, and quartered, for the false accusation.

On the 15th of October, 1483, during an eclipse of the moon, the inhabitants of Bristol were exposed to the dangers of an inundation, accompanied with a tempest. Several ships were wrecked in Kingroad, and the low country on the banks of the Severn, and the Avon, as far as Bristol, was inundated. Two hundred men, women, and children, were drowned; and houses, corn, and cattle, carried away by the flood. Great damage was done to goods in the merchants' warehouses in Bristol; and the darkness which prevailed when the inundation was at the height, rendered that circumstance more dangerous and terrible. The appearance of the moon during the eclipse was singularly curious. Her disk was variegated with streaks of red, blue, and green, with a little light at the upper part.

King Edward V. was only in the thirteenth year of his age when he succeeded his father, in 1483; and in the course of that year he was deposed, and assassinated by his ambitious uncle, who was proclaimed king, by the name of Richard III. But this cruel usurper enjoyed the regal authority only two years and two months, being defeated and slain by the Earl of Richmond, at Bosworth, on the 22d day of August, 1485.

The victor was proclaimed king by his army on the field of battle, by the name of Henry VII. The marriage of this king and the Princess Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Edward IV. terminated the competition between the houses of York and Lancaster, and the commotions which had existed in England for thirty years, and cost one hundred thousand men their lives, entirely subsided. On the day of his coronation King Henry instituted a guard of fifty archers to attend him and his successors for ever.

In 1487 the king came to Bristol, when he was met by the mayor and burgesses in Redfield. The corporation were dressed in green; they attended his majesty to the High Cross, where the clergy met him in their robes, with

children singing, and other demonstrations of joy. He was received at St. John's Gate, and conducted with great pomp to the abbey of St. Augustine, where he was entertained by the abbot.

In the year 1490, among other improvements, the streets of this city were newly paved, and the High Cross painted and gilded: the corporation manifested their loyalty and opulence by a gift of five hundred pounds to their sovereign, who in the course of the year honoured Bristol with another visit. The King was accompanied by the lord chancellor; he lodged at the abbey of St. Augustine; and before his departure, every inhabitant of Bristol, worth twenty pounds in goods, was compelled to pay a fine of twenty shillings, because their wives went so richly apparelled. This exaction was not very honourable to the feelings of a prince, to whom the burgesses had so recently manifested their attachment and liberality by a large donation; but financiers are seldom scrupulous respecting the means requisite for the acquisition of money. The increasing population, as well as prosperity of Bristol, induced several opulent individuals, in the year 1495, to begin the erection of houses in the space which surrounded St. Augustine's Green, now called College Green.

Towards the close of the fifteenth century, several opulent merchants of Bristol left memorials of their philanthropy, by the endowment of alms-houses and hospitals, which shall be described in a subsequent part of this work.—But the principal event by which Bristol was distinguished at this period, was the adventurous spirit manifested by some of its inhabitants.

The art of printing, which was invented in 1430, contributed to a more general diffusion of knowledge, and its beneficial consequences were soon demonstrated by the successful extension of geographical discoveries. America was discovered in 1492, by Columbus; and the fame of this great navigator excited the emulation of other enterprising adventurers. John Cabot, a native

They are described as being clothed in the skins of wild beasts: their food consisted of raw flesh, and they spoke in an unknown language. Their manners were savage, but they afterwards became humanized, and were clothed in the common dress then worn in England.”*

Peter Martyr, a Spaniard, accurately described the first voyage of Sebastian Cabot from Bristol to America. “The north seas have been explored by Sebastian Cabot, a Venitian born, whom his parents in his infancy carried with them to England, having occasion to resort thither for trade. For the Venitians leave no part of the world unsearched for riches. He furnished two ships in England at his own expence, and manned them with three hundred mariners. He first steered so far towards the north pole, that even in the month of July he found vast mountains of ice floating in the sea. At that season of the year, there was almost continual day-light in those northern regions, and the land along the coast was free from ice, which had been dissolved by the heat of the sun. The obstruction he met with from the mountains of ice, compelled him to change his course, and steer westward, coasting along the shores of that unknown country. As he proceeded near the coast of this great land, he discovered that the course of the waters was westward, but more gentle than the rapid current which the Spaniards found in their navigation southwards. Sebastian Cabot called these lands Baccalaos, a name given by the inhabitants to a large kind of fish, which appeared in such shoals that they sometimes interrupted the progress of his ships. He found the natives of those regions covered with the skins of beasts, yet not destitute of reason. He also observed great numbers of bears which frequented the shores, and lived upon fish which they caught with their claws. The only metal which he saw in use among the inhabitants, and which they had in abundance, was called laton. Cabot is my friend; he frequently visits at my house, and I am delighted with his

* Fabian.

company. After the death of King Henry of England the 7th of that name, Cabot was invited out of England by the catholic king of Castile, and was made one of the council and assistants for the regulation of affairs in the new Indies. We are in daily expectation that ships will be fitted out to enable him to make new discoveries in that part of the globe, and the voyage is to be begun next March, A. D. 1516."

It appears from one account of Cabot's discoveries, that like Columbus, his enterprising genius was thwarted by the mutinous disposition of his fellow-adventurers. Sir H. Gilbert, in a work entitled *A Discovery of a new Passage to Cataia*, informs us that Sebastian Cabot, by his personal experience, described this passage in his charts, which are yet to be seen in the queen majesty's privy gallery at Whitehall. He was sent to make this discovery by King Henry VII. and having entered the fret, he affirmed that he sailed very far westward, with a quarter of north, in the north side of Terra Labrador, the 11th of June, until he came to the septentrional latitude of $67\frac{3}{4}$ degrees; and finding the seas still open, said that he might and would have gone to Cataia, if the enmity of the master and mariners had not prevented him.

Of Cabot's second voyage from Bristol, we have a short account recorded by an accurate annalist.* "1498,—this year one Sebastian Cabota, born at Bristow, professing himself to be expert in knowledge of the circuit of the world and islands thereof, as by his charts, and other reasonable demonstrations he shewed, caused the king to man and victual a ship at Bristow, to search for an island which he knew to be replenished with rich commodities: in the ship, divers merchants of London adventured small stocks, and in companie with this ship sayled also out of Bristow three or four small shippes, fraught with slight and other grosse wares, as coarse cloth, caps, laces, prints, and such other."

* Howes's Continuation of Stow's Chronicles.

The intended voyage of Cabot from Spain, in 1516, was realized; he discovered the coast of Brazil, and the river of Plate, and was rewarded with the appointment of pilot-master of Spain, an honour which he long continued to enjoy; and in his old age, a pension of £166. 13s. 4d. sterling was conferred on him by King Edward VI. in 1549, with the appointment of grand pilot of England. The money was to be paid to him during his natural life, out of the treasury of the exchequer at Westminster.

The reputation and success of Cabot soon induced other adventurers from Bristol to sail on a voyage of discovery. We are informed that those navigators “in two ships of 80 tons, of Mr. Jay, a merchant, began their voyage 15th July, 1480, at the port of Bristol, in Kingroad, for the island of Brazyle, taking their course from the west part of Ireland, plowing the seas through, and Thylde is master of the ship, the most skilful mariner of all England; and news came to Bristol, Monday, 18th September, that the said ships sailed over the seas for nine months, and found not the island, but through tempests at sea returned to port in Ireland, for laying up their ships and mariners.”*

Such was the activity and perseverance manifested by the merchants of Bristol for the extension of commerce at the close of the fifteenth century, a most important epoch in the history of man. The intercourse opened between America and Europe contributed essentially to the diffusion of benevolence, and the acquisition of geographical knowledge. The cruelties, indeed, which were exercised by the Spaniards in South America, were not consistent with the principles of justice or humanity; but the general effect of an intercourse between Europe and the Asian and American nations, was certainly favourable to civilization. Mankind imperceptibly became united by the ties of reciprocal advantage; and the natives of remote regions no longer regarded each other as mortal enemies.

* Botoner's Itinerary, p. 67.

It may with truth be asserted, that Bristol has a claim to the honour of being the birth-place of those intrepid and experienced navigators who first sailed from England on a voyage of discovery. Columbus, indeed, is entitled to the precedence, as an adventurous and successful navigator; but Cabot, a native of Bristol, stands next to his illustrious cotemporary among those celebrated mariners whose discoveries have contributed to the happiness of the civilized world.

The commencement of the sixteenth century was an auspicious æra to the inhabitants of Bristol. A charter, conferring very extensive privileges, was granted to the corporation by King Henry VII. In this charter it was specified “ that the corporation shall have six aldermen, the recorder to be one, with like powers as the aldermen of London, to be chosen for the first time by the mayor and common-council, and always afterwards by the aldermen. The two bailiffs to be chosen as formerly, shall likewise be sheriffs of the county, and be sworn into and execute both offices. The mayor and two of the aldermen, with the assent of the commonalty, to choose the forty common council-men, with the same powers as were granted to them by the charter of the 47th Edward III. That for the future there shall be one chamberlain, who shall be elected by the mayor and common council in the Guildhall; the person so elected shall be a burgess, and continue in that office as long as the mayor and common council shall please: he shall also take an oath to perform his office before the mayor, &c. and shall have a seal affixed to his office, with the like powers as the chamberlain of the city of London. If any inhabitant of the town of Bristol, &c. for the future shall be disobedient to the ordinances of the mayor, aldermen, and common-council, or shall cause disturbance on the election of the mayor, or any other officer whatsoever, the offender shall be punished according to the law of the kingdom of England, by the mayor and two of the aldermen. Also the said mayor shall have power to take the probates of wills of lands, tenements, rents, and termes, within the said town, suburbs, and precincts of the same, bequeathed within two years after the death of the

testator: so that such tenements and legacies be proclaimed in full court of the Guildhall of Bristol, and enrolled in the rolls of the said court, the enrolment shall be of record; and from thence the said mayor, and his successors, may have power to put the legacies aforesaid in execution by his officers in form of law, or by due process to be made before them by writ *ex gravi querela*, and the prosecution and election of any man who will prosecute the same. The mayor and one alderman may hold their courts, and such pleas, as at any time before have been used and accustomed for the time being, for ever. And all fines and amercements shall come to the mayor and commonalty of the town, without accounting to the king, his heirs, or successors."

This royal grant was obtained by the corporation in the year 1500. In the first year of the reign of King Henry VII. he granted to Thomas Hoskins the office of bailiff of the water of Bristol, for the time of his life; and at his decease, it was granted to the mayor and commonalty to nominate one of the burgesses of the town to that office. "And the mayor, &c. shall have power to name and constitute the wages, fees, &c. to the said office due and anciently accustomed, yielding to the king and his heirs a rent of four marks of lawful money of England yearly, at the feast of St. Michael the Archangel, and to be accountable for no more than four marks as aforesaid, to be paid for the said office. And we grant that any three of the said aldermen, whereof two of them shall be the mayor and recorder of the said town, may be justices of gaol delivery within the town, and may have for the future for ever the like power, with other justices of gaol delivery, saving always to the king, and his heirs, all amercements at gaol delivery. These being witnesses, our most dear first-born son Arthur, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, and others. Dated at Knoll, the 17th of December, in the fifteenth year of our reign, 1500."

While these important charters established the municipal government of Bristol, the industry of her merchants and manufacturers promoted her prosperity.

The emulation to make foreign discoveries continued, and a patent was granted in 1502 by King Henry VII. dated 9th December, authorising James Elliot and Thomas Ashurst, merchants of Bristol, and John Gonzalles and Francis Fernandez, natives of Portugal, to go with English colours in quest of unknown countries, on certain terms expressed in the patent.* The event of this voyage is unrecorded.

The first coinage of shillings in England, in 1505, contributed to the accommodation of the trader; and in 1509, the art of horticulture was introduced from the Netherlands. At this period the kingdom enjoyed the blessings of peace and prosperity.

The accession of Henry VIII. to the throne was considered by the people as a felicitous event. This youthful sovereign, who was only in the eighteenth year of his age when he was crowned, was one of the most accomplished scholars of the age; he was also skilful in athletic exercises, courageous, and handsome. In the early part of his reign, few events of importance are recorded of Bristol. A custom, which originated in humanity, but had been abused, was abolished during the mayoralty of Mr. Joy, in 1516. It had been customary, from time immemorial, that every person from the country, who came to sell goods in the market of Bristol, should pay one halfpenny for every sack, &c. pitched in the market-place. The money thus collected was paid to the gaoler for the relief of the prisoners confined in Newgate; but it was discovered that he appropriated it to his own use. Mr. Abbinton, a public-spirited burgess, with the concurrence of the mayor, undertook to reform this abuse, and exempted the country people from paying the custom. He also established a fund to supply the prisoners with victuals, wood, and straw.

* Collection of Public Acts.

The reformation, begun by Martin Luther, in Germany, in 1517, excited the general attention of all Christendom. King Henry VIII. manifested his zeal against what was considered as heresy, by writing an answer to Luther in defence of the Papal authority. For this public service he was honoured by Leo X. with the title of *Defender of the Faith*; but his subsequent conduct proved how much the Pope was mistaken in his champion.

In the year 1522, every man was sworn what he was worth throughout the kingdom; a very unjustifiable and arbitrary measure in the government.

The manufacture of soap, begun in Bristol in 1523, was carried on with such skill and success, that the London market was supplied with that article of the best quality, at one penny a pound. But while manufactures were thus pursued, tillage must have been either neglected or mismanaged; for in the year 1524, grain was so scarce in England, that several persons attempted to make bread of fern-roots; and it is recorded that during the scarcity, bread was brought to Bristol, and the populace went in crowds to meet the waggons at Pile Hill.

Among the branches of foreign commerce, several merchants of Bristol traded to the Canary Islands in 1526. They exported cloth, soap, and other English commodities, in return for which they imported drugs, sugar, dying stuff, and kid-skins.

In a ledger belonging to Mr. N. Thorn, sen. a principal merchant of Bristol, under the date of the year 1526, there is an invoice of armour, and other merchandise, sent by him to T. Tison, an Englishman, who had settled in the West Indies. This is the first record of a trade from this city to that quarter of the globe. But a very considerable traffick between this port and

Spain, was established early in the sixteenth century. Among other English merchants who traded to Spain, it is recorded that Mr. Robert Thorn, of Bristol, and his partner, “ventured and employed 1400 ducats in a fleet of ships, fitted out and armed by the merchants of Seville; for that two Englishmen, friends of his, learned in cosmography, were to go in the said ships with Sebastian Cabot, then intended for the Moluccas, by the streights of Magellan, in April, 1527. But the voyage was pursued only to the river Plate.” The adventurers were to bring him a true account of the situation of the country, the navigation of those seas, any charts by which the inhabitants of those regions sailed, and information respecting the climate, soil, and produce of the different countries at which they touched. The conclusion of Mr. Thorn’s letter to Dr. Ley, ambassador from Henry VIII. to the Emperor Charles, is strongly expressive of the adventurous disposition of the merchants of Bristol, at that early period of English commerce. “If from the islands of the Moluccas,” says he, “the sea doth extend without interposition of land to sail from north to north-east point 1700 or 1800 leagues, they should come to the Newfoundland islands that the English discovered, and so we should be nearer to the spiceries by almost 200 leagues than the emperor, or the King of Portugal.”

In 1533 the celebrated Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, came to Bristol, where he continued nineteen days. During his stay, he reformed many abuses in public worship, and preached in St. Augustine’s Abbey, and other churches. The papal authority in England was abolished, by an act of the legislature, in 1534, and the king was declared head of the church. A curious account of the means resorted to for the edification of the people, is recorded in Stow’s Chronicle. “During the sitting of parliament, every Sunday at St. Paul’s Cross, London, preached a bishop, declaring the Pope not to be supreme head of the church. Also in other places of this realm troubles were raised about preaching, even at Bristol, where Maister Latimer preached: and there preached against him one Maister Hoberton, and Dr. Powell; so that

there were great part-taking on both sides, insomuch that divers priests and others set up bills against the mayor, and against Maister Latimer. But the mayor, permitting laymen to preach, caused divers priests to be apprehended and cast into Newgate, with bolts upon them, and divers others ran away and lost their living, rather than come in the mayor's handling."

In 1534, King Henry, in his progress through England, arrived at Thornbury. The mayor of Bristol sent ten fat oxen, and forty sheep, as a present to his majesty, and a silver cup and cover, with one hundred marks of gold, to Queen Ann. It is probable that the king was much gratified with the liberality of the corporation; for it is recorded that when he afterwards came to Bristol in disguise, accompanied by several gentlemen, he passed through the town incognito, attended by Mr. Thorn, a merchant, to whom he said, "This is now the town of Bristol, but I will make it the city of Bristol."

The king had formerly experienced the zeal and promptitude of the merchants of Bristol in his service, as appears by the following record. "Bristol was first made a county of itselfe the 47th Edward III. for notable services done to the king; and in the 34th Henry VIII. made a city, in regard of the love the said king did bear to the place, and of the great services done by the said towne, especially in the wars against the French king, who would have landed in the Isle of Wight; at which time this towne did set forth eight ships. When King Henry VIII. came on board Bristowe's fleet on that memorable time, he asked the names of their ships, and they answered the king, it is this: the first is,

	TONS.
The barque Thorn, of.....	600
The barque Pratt.....	600
The barque Gourney.....	400
The barque Younge.....	400

TONS.

The barque Winter.....300

The barque Shipman.....250

The Elephant.....120

The Dragon.....120

The king wished he had many such Thorns, Pratts, Gournays, and the like, in his londe."

In 1536 there was a general procession of the corporation, clergy, and principal inhabitants of Bristol, on account of Queen Jane being delivered of a son. The reformation had now made an extensive progress in England; but so capricious was King Henry, that he punished with equal injustice the Protestants, and the clergy who adhered to the Pope. Bristol was not without its share of religious animosity and persecution. In 1538 George Wisard, who preached in St. Nicholas' Church, was accused of heresy, and condemned to bear a faggot for his erroneous doctrine.

The suppression of monasteries throughout England, in 1539, was fatal to the papal authority in this kingdom. Among other religious establishments, the abbey of St. Augustine, and the house of St. Mark, called the Gaunts, in Bristol, were suppressed; and the following curious account of that event was transmitted by one of the commissioners to Lord Thomas Cromwell, who was nominated visitor-general. It is transcribed from the 26th volume of Dodsworth's M.S. in the Bodleian Library.

"Pleaseth your mastership to understand, that yesternight late we came from Glassenburie to Bristow to St. Austine's, whereas we begun this morning, intending this day to dispatch both this house, here being but 14 chanons, and also the gauntes, whereas be 4 or 5. By this bringer my servant, I send you reliques; 1st, two flowers wrapped in white and black sarcenet, that on

Christmas Even, (*hora ipsa qua Christus natus fuerat*) will spring and burgen and bear blossoms, *quod expertum est*, saith the prior of Maden Bradeley. Ye shall also receive a bag of reliques, whereon ye shall see strange things, as shall appear by the scripture, as God's coate, our ladies smocke, part of God's supper, in *Cæna Domini*. *Pars petrae super quam natus erat Jesus in Bethlehem*. Belike there is in Bethlehem plenty of stones. The scripture of every thing shall declare you all, and all these of Maden Bradeley, whereas is an holy Father Prior, and hath but six children, and but one daughter married yet of the goods of the monastery, trusting shortly to marry the rest. His sons be tall men, waiting upon him, and he thanke God a never medelet with married women, but all with maidens, the fairest could be gotten, and always married them right well. The Pope, considering his fragility, gave him leave to keep a whore, and hath good writings *sub plumbo*, to discharge his conscience, and to chuse Mr. Underhill to be his ghostly father, and hee to give him *plenam remissionem*, &c. I send you alsoe our lady's girdell, of Bruton red silke, which is a solemn relique sent to women travelling, which shall not miscarry in *partu*. I send you alsoe Marie Magdalen's girdell, and that is wrapped and covered with white, sent alsoe with great reverence to women travelling, which girdell Matilda, the empress, founder of Farley, gave to them, as saith the holy father of Farley. I have crosses of silver and gold, Sir, which I send you not now, because I have moe that shall be delivered mee this night by the prior of Maden Bradeley himself. To-morrow early in the morning, I shall bring you the rest when I have received all, and perchance I shall find something here. In case you depart this daie, that it may please you to send me word by this bringer, my servant, which waie I shall repair after you. Within the charter-house hath professed and done all things, according as I shall declare you at large to-morrow early. At Bruton and Glassenbury there is nothing notable, the brethren be soe straight kept that they cannot offend, but faine the would, if they might, as they confesse, and such fault is not in them.

“ From St. Austyne’s without Bristowe, this St. Bartholmew’s daie, att nine of the clock in the morning, by the speedy hand of your most assured poore prieste,

RICHARD HAYTON.”

In the month of July, 1541, Bristol was proclaimed a city. Paul Bush was chosen suffragan bishop, and to be resident at St. Augustine’s abbey, which was, according to the proclamation, to be thenceforward called Trinity College of the city of Bristol for ever. This city, now exalted to the highest honours that royalty could bestow, seems to have enjoyed considerable tranquillity during the remainder of the reign of Henry VIII. In 1543, the litany was sung in English, in a general procession from Christ Church to the Church of St. Mary Redcliff; and in the same year, Temple Fee was incorporated with the city.

The citizens of Bristol distinguished themselves by their patriotism and loyalty, at this period;—“ in 1543, twelve ships sailed out of Bristol in the king’s service, to assist at the siege of Bulloign, with Matthew Earl of Lenox, under whom served William Winter and Sir Richard Maunsell, who returned again with the earl.”

In the year 1544, this city was visited by the plague. Gunpowder had been invented in 1340, but so unskilled were the people in general in the use of this destructive chemical preparation, that frequent accidents happened. A ship was set on fire at the quay in Bristol, in 1544, by the bursting of a gun, which killed three men.

On the 26th of June, 1545, it was proclaimed at the High Cross, that the five gates of the city of Bristol should be free for the ingress and egress of strangers, with their goods; and the Back and the Quay were also proclaimed to be free for all manner of merchandise, except salt fish. This year was also memorable for the erection of a press for printing, and a mint for coining money

in the castle. The plate seized in the west of England, at the dissolution of the monasteries, was coined at this mint. About this time, King Henry gave £1000. to the city of Bristol of the purchase of the Gaunt land, to be laid out by the corporation in good uses. His majesty also gave to his physician, George Owen, certain lands in Bristol, with an injunction that he should engage a minister, at a salary of £12. to preach eight times a year, and pray for the king and his successors; and also provide a competent dwelling for three poor people.

In 1546 King Henry VIII. died; and his successor, Edward VI. was proclaimed king, in the ninth year of his age. The late king, who from the inconsistency of his character had been alternately the persecutor of the Roman Catholics and Protestants, and exercised an almost unlimited authority over the people of England, nominated in his will sixteen persons to be his executors, regents of the kingdom, and governors of his successor, Edward VI. during his minority. Consequently, the short reign of that prince may be said to have been a government by the regents. Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, was at the head of the executors; and being a zealous Protestant, he in 1548 obtained an act of the legislature for the removal of all images and paintings, and whatever else had a tendency to promote idolatry, out of the different places appropriated to public worship throughout the kingdom. According to the same act, the service of the church was performed in the English language,

According to an account given in manuscript annals of Bristol, the populace, in 1549, assembled in a riotous manner, and pulled down all the enclosures about the city, in open defiance of the mayor, and other municipal officers; in consequence of which, several individuals were arrested, and imprisoned in Newgate, and others sent to London. The period is now too remote for a clear investigation of facts relative to this riot, but it is not improbable that the account

is an exaggeration of circumstances. No motive is assigned for this public outrage; and it is very improbable that the rioters should extend their devastations indiscriminately to *all the fences about the city*.

Among other improvements in this city, the place of justice called the Tolzey was built in 1550. In July, the same year, the value of the current coin was reduced by proclamation, the shilling to nine-pence, the two-pence to a penny, and the penny to a halfpenny, to the great injury and inconvenience of the people in general; and to add to the grievance, the price of grain rose so high that the day-labourer could hardly get bread. The benevolence of the corporation of Bristol to the indigent inhabitants, was truly laudable; for, according to a regulation of the mayor, it was ordered that the bakers should supply them with bread at a moderate price.

The year 1551 was memorable for a peculiar epidemic disease, known by the name of the sweating sickness, which committed fatal ravages throughout England, raged in this city from Easter to Michaelmas, and carried off several hundreds of the inhabitants every week. For the encouragement of domestic traffick, a fair was appointed to be held yearly in Temple-street, to commence the 29th of January, and continue nine days. During the reign of Edward VI. the regency seems to have paid considerable attention to the improvement of public morals; for, according to an act of parliament, the magistrates of Bristol were restricted from granting licences to more than six vintners in this city.

On the demise of King Edward VI. in 1553, Lady Jane Grey was proclaimed Queen of England; but her pretensions were justly disputed by the Princess Mary, eldest daughter to King Henry VIII. The partisans of Jane were defeated, and the successful competitor ascended the throne on the 3d of April. Soon after the accession of Queen Mary, she was married to Philip King of Spain; on the 4th of August, 1554, they were proclaimed

King and Queen of England, at the High Cross of Bristol ; and there was a solemn procession of the clergy and corporation through the principal streets of this city, in celebration of that event. In consequence of this marriage, the interests of England and Spain became more closely united ; and the merchants of Bristol, availing themselves of that circumstance, entered into more extensive commercial engagements with the Spanish merchants.

The reign of Queen Mary was disgraced by the malignity of religious persecution. This anti-christian violence was at once subversive of that philanthropy which is the predominant principle of Christianity, and prejudicial to the temporal interests of the people of England. The infuriated zeal of the bigot, and not the patriotism of a benevolent sovereign, actuated the unhappy queen, who was misled by enthusiasm to the perpetration of cruelties at which humanity shudders. In the course of her short reign of four years, four months, and eleven days, eight hundred Protestants, including five bishops and twenty-one ministers, went to the flames, and yielded up their lives as martyrs for the truth of their religion.

" Patriots have toil'd, and in their country's cause
 " Bled nobly, and their deeds as they deserve,
 " Receive proud recompence. We give in charge
 " Their names to the sweet lyre. Th' historic muse,
 " Proud of the treasure, marches with it down
 " To latest times: and sculpture, in her turn,
 " Gives bond in stone and ever-during brass
 " To guard them, and t' immortalize her trust:
 " But fairer wreaths are due, though never paid,
 " To those, who, posted at the shrine of Truth,
 " Have fall'n in her defence. A patriot's blood,
 " Well spent in such a strife, may earn indeed
 " And for a time ensure, to his lov'd land
 " The sweets of liberty and equal laws ;

" But martyrs struggle for a brighter prize,
 " And win it with more pain. Their blood is shed
 " In confirmation of the noblest claim,
 " Our claim to feed upon immortal truth,
 " To walk with God, to be divinely free,
 " To soar, and to anticipate the skies.
 " Yet few remember them. *They liv'd unknown,*
 " Till Persecution dragg'd them into fame,
 " And chas'd them up to Heav'n. Their ashes flew
 " —No marble tells us whither. With their names
 " No bard embalms and sanctifies his song :
 " And History, so warm on meaner themes,
 " Is cold on this. She execrates indeed
 " The tyranny that doom'd them to the fire,
 " But gives the glorious sufferers little praise."

Among other victims of persecution, William Stephen, a weaver, was burnt at Bristol, on the 17th October, 1555; and in 1556, two men, one a weaver, and the other a shoemaker, were burnt on St. Michael's-hill; and a shearman suffered in the flames, for denying the sacrament at the altar to be the very body and blood of Christ.

The only instance of the royal patronage to commerce, during the reign of Queen Mary, was the incorporation of the Merchant Adventurers to Russia, in the year 1556. The company consisted of four consuls, and twenty-four assistants.*

In 1557, the queen declared war against France, by the advice of her royal consort. In the first campaign, the combined forces of Spain and England invaded Flanders, and obtained a victory over the French army, at the battle

* Mr. Barrett says, that Sebastian Cabot was constituted the first governor, being the chief encourager of this branch of trade. But this assertion is unauthorised by any existing documents. Cabot, who sailed on a voyage of discovery in 1497, must have been superannuated in 1556, a period of more than half a century.

of St. Lawrence; but in 1558 the ecclesiastics, who composed the council of Queen Mary, were so intent on the destruction of the English Protestants, that they neglected the defence of Calais, and that important town being left with an inadequate garrison, and insufficient military stores, was besieged by the Duke of Guise with a powerful army, and taken after a siege of only seven days. The people of England were exasperated at the government, for having left Calais unprovided with the means of defence. By some bold individuals, the ministry were accused of treason, and by all with incapacity. Nor were these murmurings groundless; for while Calais continued in the possession of the English, they could in twenty-four hours have landed an army from England.

Queen Mary was strongly urged by the King of Spain to make a vigorous effort for the recovery of Calais; but her attention was so completely occupied with the persecution of the Protestants, that the project was deferred. In 1558, however, she equipped a fleet of one hundred and twenty ships of war, commanded by Lord Clinton, who sailed with an intention to seize Brest. But his enterprise was frustrated, and the English, after having landed a body of troops which burnt the town of Conquest, were repelled by a superior force, and obliged to retire to their ships, with the loss of six hundred men. The citizens of Bristol participated in the risk and loss of this unsuccessful expedition; for it is recorded in an ancient manuscript, that "Bristol hath been always loyal to the king's majestie's progenitors, and the next to the crown, not consenting to the proclaiming Queen Jane, though she was so proclaimed in sundrie places. Bristol has been found willing and serviceable ever to their prince, in Queen Marie's time against the French, when they sustained great losses by sea, to the undoing of many, whereof some were taken prisoners."

Robert Adams, mayor of Bristol, was cited to appear before the queen's council in 1558; the charges against him are unknown, but they were probably respecting his religious principles. It appears that he was honourably dismissed;

and his retinue and mode of travelling afford an idea of the pomp attached to municipal authority, and the hospitality characteristic of that age. During his journey to London, and on his return, he kept a table for the accommodation of all visitors; he was attended by eight men in livery, and accompanied by the steward and chamberlain. On his approach to the city, he was met at Marshfield by four hundred horsemen, and two hundred men on foot; a proof of his popularity, and the high estimation in which he was held by his fellow-citizens.

On the demise of Mary, in November, 1558, her sister Elizabeth was proclaimed queen. This princess, who was a Protestant, had lived with the utmost circumspection during the reign of her sister, whose zeal for Popery would have sacrificed Elizabeth, had not King Philip generously dissuaded her from the perpetration of so enormous a crime. Elizabeth had passed her juvenile years in retirement, where she devoted herself to literature, first as an amusement, and afterwards as a favourite pursuit, which proved highly conducive to her future glory, during a long and prosperous reign. Immediately on receiving intelligence of the death of her sister, she came from her retirement at Hatfield, in Essex, to London, followed by a numerous train of the nobility, and a vast concourse of the people, who testified their joy at her accession to the throne by reiterated acclamations. She was proclaimed queen, and crowned at Westminster, on the 19th of November, 1558, in the twenty-sixth year of her age.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

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CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

SOON after the coronation of Queen Elizabeth, the Protestant religion was re-established in England, by three acts of the legislature. The first appointed the public worship to be performed in the English language; the second restored to the queen her right of supremacy in the church of England; and the third renewed and confirmed all the acts made in the reign of Edward VI. respecting religion. In the House of Lords eight bishops and nine peers protested against the restoration of the Protestant religion; but in the House of Commons it was carried unanimously. Few important events relative to Bristol are recorded in the early part of this sovereign's reign. That the merchants and manufacturers of this city successfully persevered in the acquisition of wealth, cannot be doubted; their ample charters, peculiar immunities, and extensive foreign connections, all contributed to a steady increase of wealth, and the consequent improvement of the town; and when the kingdom was menaced by invasion, the alacrity, zeal, and success of the merchants and mariners of this ancient city, in the repulsion of the enemy, afforded an illustrious instance of their bravery and patriotism.

The first appearance of the Aurora Borealis in our hemisphere, in 1564, is mentioned as having excited in some of the citizens of Bristol a superstitious

dread of an approaching national calamity. We are gravely informed, in a manuscript record of the city, that "on the 17th of October, in Bristol, there were seen in the sky, beams as red as fire out of a furnace, and after that there followed a plague, which lasted a whole year in this city, and carried off upwards of two thousand five hundred people." In the winter of the same year there was a very severe frost, insomuch that the river was frozen over at Kingroad, and people went over on foot to St. George's.

In 1568, the Duke of Norfolk came from Bath to Bristol. On the day of his arrival, his grace viewed the city with much satisfaction, and next morning he went to the church of St. Mary Redcliff, and heard a sermon; and thence to Temple Church, to see the vibrations of the tower during the ringing of the bells. This nobleman was executed for high treason in 1572. An important regulation for the prevention of accidents by fire, was established in this city in 1569; by which all houses and buildings were forbidden to be thatched with straw or reeds, on pain of being pulled down.*

* *A Description of the Houses, Furniture, Manners, and Customs of the English in the Year 1571, from Hollinshed's British History, p. 84-85.*

OF THE MANNER OF BUYLDING, AND FURNITURE OF OUR HOUSES.

The greatest parte of our buylding in the cities and good townes of England consisteth only of timber, for as yet fewe of the houses of the comminalty (except here and there in the west country townes) are made of stone, although they may in my opinion in divers other places be builded so good cheape of the one as of the other. In olde tyme the houses of the Brytons were slitley set up with a few postes, and many rables, the like whereof almost is to be seene in the fenny countries unto this day, where for lacke of wood they are inforced to continue this auncient manner of buylding. It is not in vayne, therefore, in speaking of buylding to make a distinction betweene the playne and woddye countrie, for as in these, our houses are commonly strong and well timbered, so that in many places there are not above six or nine inches betweene studde and studde; so in the open and champaine soyles they are inforced for want of stuffe to use no studdes at all, but only raysines, groundselles, transomes, and upright principalles, with here and there an overthwart post in their walles whereunto they fasten their splintes or rables, and then cast it all over with clay to keepe out the winde, which otherwyse would annoy them. In like sort as every country house is thus appareled on the outside, so is it inwardly devided into sundrie rowmes above and beneth, and where plentie of woode is they cover them with tyles, otherwise with

For the better accommodation of the citizens of Bristol, and the inhabitants in its vicinity, the market in St. Thomas-street was opened in 1570, by the

straw, sedge, or reede, except some quarry of slate be near hand, from whence they have for theyr money, so much as may suffice them. The clay wherewith our houses are empanneiled is eyther white, redde, or blewe; and of these the first doth participate very much with the nature of our chalke; the seconde is called lome; but the thirde eftsoones changeth coulour so soone as it is wrought, notwithstanding that it looke blewe when it is throwne out of the pit. Of chalke also we have our excellent whyte lime made in most places, wherewith we stricke over our clay workes and stone walles, in cities, good townes, rich fermers, and gentlemen's houses.

Within their doores also, such as are of abilitie do oft make their flowers and parget of fine alabaster burned, which they call plaster of Paris, whereof in some places we have great plentie, and that very profitable agaynst the rage of fire. In plastering likewise of our fayrest houses over our heades, we use to lay first a lair or two of white mortar tempered with heire upon lathes, which are nayled one by another, and fynallye cover all with the aforesayde plaster, which beside the delectable whitenesse of the stuffe itselfe, is layed on so even and smouthly as nothing in my judgment can be done with more exactnesse. This also hath bene comon in England, contrarie to the customes of all other nations, and yet to be seene (for example, in most streetes of London,) that many of our greatest houses have outwardly beene very simple and plaine to sight, which inwardly have beene able to receive a duke, with his whole trayne, and lodge them at their ease.

Hereby moreover it is come to passe, that the frontes of our streetes have not beene so uniforme and orderly buylded as those of forrain cities, where to saye truth the utterside of theyr mansions and dwellings, have oft more cost bestowed upon them, then all the reast of the house, which are often very simple and uneasie within, as experience doth confirme. Of olde tyme our country houses insteede of glasse dyd use much lattice, and that made eyther of wicker or fine riftes of oke in chekerwyse. I read also that some of the better sorte in and before the tymes of the Saxons did make panels of horne insteede of glasse, and fix them in wooden calmes; but as horne is quite layd downe in every place, so our lattices are also growne into lesse use, bycause glasse is come to be so plentifull, and within a very little so good cheape as the other.

Heretofore also the houses of our princes and noblemen were often gased with beril, (an example whereof is yet to be seene in Sudley Castell) and in divers other places with fine cristall; but this especially in the time of the Romaines, whereof also some fragments have been taken up in olde ruines. But now these are not in use, so that onely the clearest glasse is most esteemed, for we have divers sortes, some brought out of Burgundie, some out of Normandy, and much out of Flaunders, beside that which is made in England so good as the best, and eache one that may, will have it for his building. Moreover, the mansion houses of our coutry townes and villages, (which in champaine groundes stande altogether by streetes, and joining one to another; but in woodelands soyles dispersed here and there, each one upon the several groundes of their owners are builded in suche sorte generally, as that they have neither dairy, stable, nor bruehouse, annexed unto them under the same rooffe, (as in many places beyonde the sea) but all separate from the first, and one of them from another. And yet for

following proclamation, at the High Cross. “Whereas it hath pleased the queen’s majesty, for gracious respects, to grant unto themayor and commonalty

all this, they are not so farre distant in sunder, but that the good man lying in his bed may lightly heare what is done in each of them with ease, and call quickly unto his meney if any danger shoulde attacke hym.

The auncient maners and houses of our gentlemen are yet and for the most part of stroug tymber. Howbeit such as be lately buylded are commonly either of bricke or harde stone, their rowmes large and stately, and houses of office farder distaunt fro their lodgings. Those of the nobility are likewise wrought with bricke and hard stone, as provision may best be: but so magnificent and stately, as the basest house of a barren doth often match with some honours of princes in olde tyme, so that if ever curious buylding dyd florish in Englande, it is in these our dayes, wherein our worckmen excell, and are in manner comparable in skill with olde Vitruvius, and Serlo.

The furniture of our houses also exceedeth, and is growne in manner even to passing delicacie; and herein I do not speake of the nobilitie and gentrie onely, but even of the lowest sorte that have any thing at all to take to. Certes in noblemen’s houses it is not rare to see abundance of arras, riche hangings of tapistry, silver vessell, and so much other plate, as may furnish sundrie cupbords to the summes oft times of a thousand or two thousand pounce at least: whereby the value of this and the reast of their stuffe doth grow to be inestimable. Likewise in the houses of knightes, gentlemen, marchauntmen, and some other wealthie citizens, it is not geson to beholde generallye there great provision of tapestrie, Turkeye worke, pewter, brasse, fine linen, and therto costly cupbords of plate worthe five or six hundred pounce, to be deemed by estimation. But as herein all these sortes doe farre exceede there elders, and predecessours, so in time past, the costly furniture stayed there, whereas now it is descended yet lower, even into the inferiour artificers and most fermers, who have learned also to garnish their cupbordes with plate, their beddes with tapistrie, and silk hangings, and their tables with fine naperie, whereby the wealth of our countrie doth infinitely appeare. Neyther do I speake this in reproch of any man God is my judge, but to show that I doe rejoyce rather to see how God hath blessed us with his good giftes, and to behould how that in a time wherein all thinges are growen to most excessive prices, we do yet finde the meanes to obtayne and atchieve such furniture as heretofore hath been impossible.

There are olde men yet dwelling in the village where I remayne, which have noted those things to be marveyulously altered in Englande, within their sound remembraunce. One is the multitude of chimnies lately erected, whereas in their young dayes there were not above two or three, if so many, in most uplandish townes of the realme, (the religious houses and manour places of their lordes always excepted, and peradventure some great personages) but eache one made his fire against a rerebosse, in the hall where he dined and dressed his meate. The second is ye great amendement of lodginge, for sayde they, our fathers and we ourselves have lyen full oft upon straw pallettes covered onely with a sheete under coverlettes made of bagswain or hopharlots (I use their owne termes) and a good rounde logge under their heades insteade of a boulder. If it were so that our fathers or the good man of the house, had a materes or flockbed, and thereto a sacke of chafe to rest hys heade upon,

of this city of Bristol, and to their successors for ever, a market to be kept weekly in St. Thomas-street, within the parish of St. Thomas, for wool, yarn, and cattle, and all things there to be bought and sold, by her grace's letters patents, bearing date the 14th of December, in the thirteenth year of her reign. Know ye, therefore, that we, William Tucker, mayor of this city, and the aldermen of the same, do by virtue of the said letters patents, give understanding and knowledge unto all her majesty's loving subjects, that the said market shall begin to be holden and kept in the city of Bristol, in St. Thomas-street, upon the Thursday next and after the Annunciation of our Lady, in Lent now coming, in the present year of her majesty's reign, and so

he thought himselfe to be as well lodged as the lorde of the towne, so well were they contented. Pillowes, sayde they, were thought meete onely for women in childebed. As for servantes, if they had any sheete above them, it was well, for seldome had they any under their bodies, to keepe them from the pricking strawes, that ranne oft thorow the canvas, and raced their hardened hides.

The thirde thinge they tell of, is the exchange of treene platters into pewter, and woode spoones into silver or tin. For so common were all sorts of treene vesselles in old time, that a man should hardly find four peces of pewter (of which one was peradventure a salte) in a goode farmer's house, and yet for al this frugaltie (if it may so be justly called) they were scarce able to lyve and paye their rentes, at their dayes without selling a cow, or a horse, or mare, although they payde foure poundes at the uttermost by the yeare. Such also was their poverty, that if a fermour or husbandman had beene at the alehouse, a thyng greatly used in those dayes, amongst six or seaven of hys neyghbours, and there in a bravery to shewe what store he had, did cast downe hys purse and therein a noble or sixe shillings in silver unto them, it was very likely that all the rest could not lay downe so much against it: whereas in my tyme although peradventure foure pounce of olde rent be improved to forty or fiftye pound; yet will the farmour thinke his gains very small toward the middest of his terme) if he have not sixe or seaven yeres rent lying by him, wherewith to purchase a new lease, beside a fine garnishe of pewter on his cupborde, three or foure feather beddes, so many coverlettes and carpettes of tapistry, a siver salte, a bowle for wine (if not a whole neast) and a dussen of spoones to furnish up the sute. Thys also he taketh to bee his own cleare, for what stocke of money soever he gathereth in all his yeares, it is often seene, that the landlorde will take such order with him for the same, when he reneweth his lease (which is comm only eight or ten years before it be expyred, sith it is nowe growen allmoste a custome, that if he come not to his lorde long before, another shall step in for a reversion, and so defeate him outright) that it shall never trouble him more then the heare of his bearde, when the barber hath washed and shaven it from his chinne.

it shall continue. God save the Queen."—This year the Earl of Bedford, and his son, came to Bristol, attended by a retinue of many knights.

In 1571, Queen Elizabeth gave the chapel of St. Mary, in the church-yard of St. Mary Redcliff, to the parishioners, for a free grammar and writing school. It is adorned with a statue of the royal donor, and supported by many benefactions.

The year 1572 is memorable in the annals of Bristol, for the first incorporation of the city companies. The mayor for this year changed the watch which was kept on Midsummer night and St. Peter's night, into a general muster of the burgesses on St. John's and St. Peter's days. The city companies mustered with arms, under their proper ensigns, and performed the military exercise; and this establishment of trained bands was occasioned by the hostile preparations of the Spaniards for the invasion of England.

On the 14th of August, 1573, Queen Elizabeth came, in her progress through the kingdom, to Bristol, where she was received with great pomp and solemnity by the mayor, aldermen, and incorporated companies formed under their proper ensigns. The mayor carried the sword of state before her majesty, bareheaded, and attended her to Mr. John Young's, on St. Augustine's Back. During the procession, all ranks of people testified their joy at the condescension of the royal visitor, by acclamations, and other demonstrations of loyalty and attachment. At her departure she conferred the honour of knighthood on Mr. Young. The following curious account of the reception of the queen in Bristol, and the amusements for her gratification, is at once entertaining and illustrative of the manners and sentiments then prevalent in this city.*

* This description is taken from a pamphlet entitled "The whole order howe our Sovereigne Ladye Queene Elizabeth was received into the Citie of Bristowe, 1574, and the speeches spoken before her presens at her Entry. Devised and published only by Thomas Churchyard, Gent. Imprinted at London, in Flete-streate, near unto Saint Dunstan's Church, by Thomas Marsh, 1575."

“ At the Highe Crosse, in a disgised manner, stood Faem, very orderly set forth, and spoke as followeth, by an excellent boy.

“ Ne flete of foot, nor swift of wyng, nor skarce the thought in brest,
 “ Nor yet the arrowe out of boe, nor wynd that seld doth rest;
 “ Compares with me, quick world's report, that som call flying Faem,
 “ A bruit of praise, a blast of pomp, a blazer of good naem,
 “ The only lawd that kings do seek, a joy to catch estaet,
 “ A welcome friend that all men loves, and noen alive doth haet,
 “ Salutes the Queen, of rare renown, whose goodly gifts devien,
 “ Throw earth and air with glory great shall passe this trump of mien.
 “ And knowing of thy coming here, my duety bad me goe,
 “ Before unto this present place, the news thereof to shoe.
 “ No sooner was pronounst the name, but babes in street gan leap,
 “ The youth, the age, the ritch, the poor, cam runninge all on heap,
 “ And clapping hands, cried maynly out ‘ O blessed be the owre!
 “ Our Queen is comyng to the towne, with princely trayn and poure.’
 “ Then collors cast they o’er the walls, and deckt old housis gaye,
 “ Out flew the bags about afayres that long a herding laye,
 “ Asid they set their townish trashe, and works of gredy gayen,
 “ And torn’d their toils to sports and mirth, and warlike pastimes playn,
 “ As shall be seen to morn in feeld, if that your Highness pleas;
 “ Where dutie hath devis’d by art a shoe on land and seas.
 “ To other matter yet unknown that shall explained be
 “ By such dom sights and shoes of war as thear your Grace shall se.
 “ Thus subjects mean to honor Prince, whose sight thy have enjoy’d,
 “ Most glad hit is thear hap to have their service so employed.”

“ Then Faem flung up a great garland, to the rejoicing of the beholders. At the next gate and near her Highness lodgings, stood III other boyes, called Salutacion, Gratulacion, and Obedient Good-Will: and two of these boyes spoke as followe, and all three drue their swords when it was named, *the hoel Staet is reddie to defend against all dissencions a peaceable prince.*

SALUTACION THE FIRST BOYE.

“ All hayll, O plant of grace, and speshall sprout of faem,
 “ Most welcome to this western coest, O perl and princely Daem,
 “ As loe a custom is whear humble subjects dwells,
 “ When Prynce approacheth neer their vew for joy to ring their bells;

" So all that beareth lief in Bristowe now this daye
 „ Salutes the Queen from depth of breast with welcome ev'ry way,
 " And we poor silly boyes, that cam from skool of late,
 " Rejolge and clap our hands withall, as members of thy staet, &c."

* * * * *

" After these speeches wear ended, III hundred soldiers well appoynted wayted on her Highness to her lodgyng, and thear she beyng settled, they shot off thear peeces in passyng good order, at which warning the great artillry went of, a hundred and xxx cast peeces, and so the watch changed, and a hundred shot apoynted for her gard, her Highness rested that night, whear she lay all the season in Sir John Yong's house.

" A fort was made beyond the water in a ground fit for that purpose, to which piel the soldiers of the main fort did repayre. Now must be understood that Dissension passing between War and Peace had certain speeches in vers, which could not be said in the hearing of the Prince, wherefore they were put into a book and presented.

" The Sunday next the Queen went to the Colledge, to hear a Sarmond, whaer thear was a speetch to be sayd and an imme to be songe; the speetch was left out by an occasion unlook'd for, but the imme was songe by a very fien boye.

" A skafold the next day was set up full over against the fort; and the Prince being placed, after which was warres in such a store, that you might see the feelde all overspread with soldiers as they marched down a hill full against the little fort, and repulsing in all the soldiers of the same, wan it with great furie, and so rased it, and overthrew it down to the earth.

" The mayn fort in the mean while did send sutch suker as they might: but prevaylyng not, they wear in like sort driven back, and thear fort besieged and mutch ado abut the saem, which drove out that day, and then by tortch light the Prince from her skaffold went to her lodgyng, and in the mean season som fier-works wear seen, and the watch was changed.

" The second day was thaer maed a new aprocht to the mayn fort; for a better order of warre, and to the ayde of the fort, cam divers gentylmen of good callyng from the court, which maed the shoe very gallant, and set out the matter mutch.

" Now served the tied, and up the water from Kyng-road cam three brave galleys, chasing a ship that cam with vittayls to the fort. The fort seyng that their extremitie within was great, sent a gentilman to the prince for ayd, who brought her a book covered with green velvet, which uttered the whoell substance of this device.

" So he departed, and all this while the business was great about the fort, and in a wonders bravery the broyll continued, with a shoe of fight on land and sea, till the very night approtched, at which time the Prince partted, and stoed marvelously well contented with that she had seen.

" Now you must conceyve that warres waxt a weery, and that neither the fort, nor the wickedness of the world (which warres represented) were desirous of further trobuls, but rather glad to have the matter taken up on any reasonable conditions, for which purpose was devised that Perswasion should go and tell his taell (to the Citie) and unfold what follies and conflicts rise in civill broyle, and that quietness comes by a mutual love and agreement.

THE CITIES ANSWER TO PERSWASION.

" Dissention first that cal'd to mind our old foerfathers faem,
 " And ript up seams of patched prayers, skarce worth the noet or naem,
 " Brought peace and warre in this uproar, our ruels sutch brawls denies,
 " Our traed doth stand on siville lief, and thear our glory lies ;
 " And not on strife, the ruen of staets, a storm that all destroys,
 " A heavy bondage to eatch hart, that Freedom's fruet enjoys ;
 " Our orders makes the royster meek, and plucks the proud on knees,
 " The stif and stubborne kno the yoke, and roots up rotten trees,
 " That may infect a fruitful field : what can be sweet or sownd,
 " But in that soyl whear for offence is due correction fownd ?
 " Wee make the sivill laws to shien, and by example mild,
 " Reform the rued, rebuke the bold, and tame the country wield.
 " We venter goods and lieves, ye knoe, and travill seas and land,
 " To bring by trafick heaps of wealth and treasuer to your hand.
 " We are a stay and stoerhouse both to kingdoms farr and neer,
 " A cause of plentie throw foresyght whan things wax scarce and deer,
 " And thoughe our joy be most in peace, and peace we do maintain,
 " Whereon to prince and realm throwout does rise great welth and gain ;
 " Yet have we soldyars, as you see, that stoers but when we pleas,
 " And sarves our towns in houshold things, and sits in shop at eas.
 " And yet daer blaed hit with the best, when cawse of country coms,
 " And calls out courage to the fight by sound of warlike droms.
 " We marchants keep a mean unmixt with any jarring part
 " And bring both treble and the baess in order still by art.
 " A souldiour shal be liked wel, if his dezarts be sutch,
 " A noble mind for noble acts shall suer be honor'd mutch,
 " But if men glory all in warres, and peace disdayns indeed,
 " We skorn with any siroep sweet their humour sowre to feed,

" And blest be God, we have a prince by whom our peace is kept,
 " And under whom this Citie long and land hath safly slept;
 " From whom likewyse a thousand gifts of grace enjoy we doe,
 " And feel from God in this her rayne ten thousand blessings too.
 " Behold but how all secrets fier of falshed coms to light
 " In these her dayes, and God taks part with her in troeth and right
 " And mark how mad dissention thrives, that would set warre abroetch
 " Who sets to saell poor people's lives, and gets but vile reproetch,
 " And endless shame for all their sleights, O England joy with us,
 " And kis the steps where she doth tread, that keeps her country thus
 " In peace and rest, and perfect stay; whearfore the God of Peace,
 " In peace by peace our peace preserve, and her long lief encrease."

" This was to be done and put in exercises before the Queen cam to the knitting up of the matter; but perswasion being dismist, the battry was planted befoer the fort, and they within so straitly enclosed that they must needs abied the mercy of the sword and cannon.

" At which instant, in the afternoon that present day, the prince was in her skaffold, to behold the successe of these offers of warre; and so went the battry off and the assaut was given in as mutch order as might be; the enemie was three times repulsed, and beholdyng new succurs commyng from the court to the fort's great comfort, the enemie agreed on a parley, whearin was rehersed that the cortain was beaten down, and the fort made sawtable, and yet the enemie to save the lives of good citizens and soldiars therof, would give them leave to depart with bag and багаег, as orders of warre required. To the which the fort maed answer, that the cortains nor bulwarks were their defens, but the corrage of a good peple, and the force of a mighty Prince (who saet and beheld all these doyngs) was the thing they trusted to, in which answer the enemie retired, and so conditions of peace were drawn and agreed of, at which peace both the sides shot off their artillerie, in sien of a triomphe, and so crying "*God save the Queen,*" these triumphs and warlike pastims finished. The prince, liking the handlyng of these causes verie well, sent two hundreth crowns to mak the souldiers a banket. Now here is to be considered that the prince went into the gallees, and so down to Kingroed (for Wales) aer these things wear brought to an end.

" At her Highness departure a gentilman in the confiens of the town's liberties spaek this speech that follows.

THE DOLEFULL A DUE.

" Our joy is joyn'd with grevous groens, our triumphe torn'd to tears,
 " The brantch whose blossoms gladnes broght a bitter berry bears.
 " In house and street whear mirth was hard is moen and moorning noies,
 " The summer day is dim'd with clouds, eclysped are our joys.
 " The loed star leavs our wished cowers, and climes the heavens high,
 " Our sofrant wile no longer lord in walls of Bristow lie.

" Long loek'd this citie for a prince, long sens and many a year,
 " A King and Queen beheld this town, short time she taryes haer.
 " Good fortune follow thee O Queen! and gied thy doings all,
 " A world of threefold blessed happ upon thy kingdom fall!
 " As loeth to taek our heavy leave, as leave our lives indeed;
 " A due deer Lady of this Land; the living Lord thee speed!"

According to an ancient manuscript the plague was very hot in this city in 1574, but the particulars of the mortality are unrecorded. During the fair of St. James's, in 1574, several seamen stole out of Crogan-Pill a bark, with an intent to rob the passengers that came in other vessels from Bristol. But their daring piracy proved unsuccessful, and they abandoned the vessel on the coast of Wales, where four of them were taken and brought to this city. On the 25th of September, they were arraigned and condemned; one of them was pardoned, but the others were executed on a gibbet in Cannon's Marsh, opposite Gib-Taylor, at the point near the river.

Among the numerous benefactions and bequests of benevolent citizens to the different charitable establishments of Bristol, may be mentioned the sum of two thousand pounds, bequeathed by Sir John Gresham, of London, in 1577, to purchase land for the benefit of the poor clothiers of this city.

The increase of the population and extent of Bristol requiring a greater number of magistrates for the due administration of justice, the Queen, in the year 1581, granted the citizens a new charter; by which they were empowered to nominate six additional Aldermen, and to divide the city into twelve wards, over which eleven Aldermen and the Recorder presided.

The advantages obtained by the merchants of Bristol, from the fishery on the banks of Newfoundland, animated them to the prosecution of another voyage of discovery to the western hemisphere. Accordingly, in 1583, they solicited

the royal permission, to fit out one vessel of sixty, and another of forty tons, for the coast of America, S. W. of Cape Breton. They also offered one thousand marks for the service of the state, and received an answer from Sir Francis Walsingham, her Majesty's principal secretary, in which their zeal and public spirit was highly praised. It does not appear, however, that they realized this scheme.

This was indeed a most remarkable epoch in the history of English commercial and maritime adventure. The East India Company, and Turkey Company were incorporated in 1579; in the subsequent year Sir Francis Drake returned from his voyage round the world; and in 1583, Sir Walter Raleigh settled a colony in North America, which he named Virginia in honour of the Queen.

Among the number of eminent men who adorned England, during the reign of Elizabeth, the learned Camden was pre-eminent for his knowledge of British topography; nay he may justly be considered as the first satisfactory writer on that subject. The itineraries of Antoninus and Leland are evidently defective, when compared with the *Britannia* of Camden. That work is indeed a most elaborate and valuable description of the British islands; the documents were collected with incredible application and perseverance during ten years; and the first edition was published in 1586, dedicated to that patriotic statesman, Lord Burleigh. In the progress of his great topographical work, Camden collected a considerable portion of his materials from actual observation; and the following description of Bristol at that period, translated from his *Britannia*, is truly curious and interesting, affording an entertaining account of the city, its vicinity, and the state of its commerce.

“The river Avon parts Bristol in the middle. It was called by the Britons *Caer Oder Nant Badon*, or the city *Odera* in *Badon* valley. In Antoninus's

catalogue of ancient cities, it is named *Caer Brito*; and in Saxon, *Brightstowe*, that is a famous place. But those who have affirmed it to be the *Venta Belgarum*, have probably imposed both upon themselves and the world.

“ This city is situated partly in Somersetshire, and partly in Gloucestershire, but it does not properly belong to either, having distinct magistrates, and being a county incorporate by itself. It stands upon pretty high ground, between the Avon and the little river Frome, and is well defended with walls and rivers. It was formerly enclosed with a double wall. The general appearance both of its public and private buildings is beautiful and magnificent. Its streets are clean, and the filth is conveyed to the river by *Cloacæ*, or what the inhabitants call gouts, which are built in subterraneous caverns; in consequence of which, carts or other heavy carriages are not used here. Nothing is deficient in Bristol, with respect to neatness or convenience in the streets and houses; it is so populous, and well supplied with the necessaries of life, that next to London and York, it may justly claim a pre-eminence over all the cities in Britain. In consequence of its advantageous situation for commerce, and the excellence of the harbour, by which large vessels under sail are admitted at high water into the very heart of the city, the trade of many nations is drawn hither. The citizens themselves carry on a profitable trade with the different nations of Europe, and make voyages to the most remote regions of America.

“ At what time and by whom the city of Bristol was built, is hard to say; but *it seems* to be of late date, since during the piratical invasion of the Danes, it is not so much as mentioned in our histories. I am of opinion, that it rose on the decline of the Saxon government, since it is first mentioned in the year of our Lord 1063, when Harold (according to Florence of Worcester) set sail from *Brytstow* to invade Wales.

“ In the beginning of the Norman times *Berton* an adjoining farm and *Bristow*, according to the record in doomsday book, paid to the king 110 marks of silver, and the burgesses returned that bishop G. had 33 marks and one of gold. Afterwards Robert, bishop of Constance, plotting against William Rufus, chose this for a seat of war, and fortified the city with that inner wall, part of which yet remains. In a few years afterwards, the suburbs were enlarged on every side, and Radcliff on the south, is joined to the rest of the city by a stone bridge, on each side of which a row of houses gives it the appearance of a street. This part is included within the walls, and the inhabitants have the privileges of citizens.

“ In this city there are neat churches, built for the glory of God, and hospitals for the relief of the poor. Among the churches, the most beautiful is St. Mary's of Radcliffe, without the walls, to which there is a stately ascent by many stone stairs. This edifice is so large, and the gothic workmanship so exquisite, the roof so artificially vaulted with stone, and the tower so high, that in my opinion, it much excels all the parish churches in England that I have yet seen. In it the founder, William Cannings, has two honorary monuments; the one is his image in the habit of a magistrate, for he was five times mayor of this city—the other represents him in a clerical habit, for in his latter days he took orders, and was nominated to the deanery of the college which he founded at Westbury. In the vicinity of this church there is another called Temple, the tower of which vibrates when the bells are rung, insomuch that there is a chink from top to bottom, between it and the body of the church, of three fingers breadth, alternately growing narrower and broader according to the vibration of the bells.

“ St. Stephen's church is remarkable for its stately tower of curious workmanship, which was, in the memory of our grandfathers, built by John Barstaple, a rich merchant of Bristol.

“ On the northern and eastern parts, the city was also enlarged with many buildings included within the walls, being defended by the river Frome; which after it has passed these walls, runs calmly into the Avon, forming a great harbour for shipping, and a creek convenient to load and unload merchandize, which the citizens call the Quay. Under this, near the confluence between the Avon and the Frome, there is a considerable space called the Marsh, which is planted with trees, and affords a pleasant walk to the citizens.

“ At the south-east, where the rivers did not encompass Bristol, Robert, illegitimate son of Henry I. built a large and strong castle for the defence of his city, and out of a pious inclination, appropriated every tenth stone for the erection of a chapel, near the priory of St. James, which he also erected near the city. He married Mabile, daughter and sole heir of Robert Fitz-hamon, who held this city in fealty of William the Norman. This castle, when scarcely finished, was unsuccessfully besieged by King Stephen; who not many years after being made a prisoner there, was a fair instance of the uncertain events of war.

“ Beyond the river Frome, over which at Frome-gate is a bridge, a steep hill in the suburbs affords a pleasant prospect of the subjacent city and harbour. On the top of this hill there is a large green plain, with a grove in the middle, where there is a pulpit of stone, and a chapel, in which, according to tradition, Jordan, the companion of St. Augustin the English apostle, was buried; but it is now a free school.

“ This city, not to mention the private houses, is beautified on all sides with magnificent public buildings. On one side with a collegiate church, called Gaunt's, from its founder Sir Henry Gaunt, Knight; who quitting temporal affairs, here dedicated himself to God. Now by the munificence of T. Carre, a wealthy citizen, it is converted into an hospital for orphans. On the other side, opposite this hospital, are two churches dedicated to St. Augustin; the one but

small and a parish church—the other larger, and the bishop's cathedral, adorned by King Henry VIII. with six prebendaries. The greatest part of it is now pulled down; and the college gate, which indeed is curiously built, has the following inscription: “Rex Henricus secundus et Dominus Robertus filius Hardigni filii Regis Daciæ hujus monasterii primi fundatores extiterunt.” That is, “King Henry II. and Lord Robert, the son of Harding, son to the King of Denmark, were the first founders of this monastery.” Robert Harding's son of the blood royal of Denmark, was an alderman of Bristol, and so high in favour with King Henry, that according to the advice of the sovereign, his son Maurice was married to the daughter of the lord of Berkley; whence his posterity, who flourished in great pomp, are to this day called Barons of Berkley, some of whom are buried in this church.

“At a short distance from Bristol towards the sea, where the Avon runs, there are high rocks on both sides of the river, as if nature had formed them with particular skill. One of these rocks, which hangs over the river on the east side, is called St. Vincent's, which yields abundance of diamonds, insomuch that bushels of them may be obtained; but their number lessens their value among us, for in transparency they are equal to the gems imported from India, and do not yield to them in any property except hardness. Their being formed by nature into four or six angles, in my opinion, renders them more admirable than the productions of the foreign mines. The other rock, on the western side, is likewise full of diamonds, which by a wonderful operation of nature, are contained in hollow reddish flints. The Avon, after it has passed by these rocks, disembogues itself into the broad estuary of the Severn.”

The most important political event, during the long and auspicious reign of Elizabeth, was the total defeat of the Spanish Armada, in 1588, off the coast of England. On this glorious occasion, the citizens of Bristol fitted out four ships of war, named the Unicorn, the Minion, the Handmaid, and the Ayde, which

joined the royal fleet at Plymouth, and shared in the danger and glory of a contest with the Spanish fleet, which, from its magnitude and force, was vauntingly called by the Spaniards, "*The Invincible Armada*." But, like the Invincibles of Bonaparte, those proud braggarts were vincible by Britons. Let then the descendants of those heroic warriors who so nobly signalized themselves in defence of their country, their liberties, and their religion, under the animating influence of one of the most illustrious women that ever called forth the spirit of chivalry, look forward with confidence in the protection of the GREAT BEING whose OMNIPOTENCE has hitherto preserved them from foreign hostility. Well may they adopt the grateful sentiments of the poet apostrophizing his country.

" His POWER secur'd thee when presumptuous Spain

" Baptiz'd her fleet Invincible in vain ;

" Her gloomy monarch, doubtful and resign'd

" To ev'ry pang, that racks an anxious mind,

" Ask'd of the waves, that broke upon his coast,

" What tydings? and the surge replied—All lost !"

Never did the characteristic heroism of the English, and their attachment to their sovereign, appear with more lustre than in their preparations to repel the Spaniards, both by sea and land. The fleet under the command of Admiral Lord Howard and Vice-Admirals Drake, Hawkins, and Forbisher, engaged the Spanish Armada on the 23d of July, 1588, and captured fifteen large ships, and 4791 men, and the principal part of the remainder being dispersed by a storm on the coast of Ireland, seventeen ships and 5394 men, were taken in the month of September. The residue were either wrecked, or returned with difficulty to Spain.

Three armies, amounting to 76,000 infantry, and 3000 cavalry, were stationed along the southern coast, and at different points where the enemy might attempt to land. The queen went to the camp, exhorted the soldiers to the valiant defence of their country, and avowed her intention to venture her life in the common cause. But the victory obtained at sea prevented an invasion ; and

the 24th of November, being the day appointed by her majesty for a general thanksgiving to Almighty God, for his providential deliverance of the kingdom from foreign tyranny and slavery, was kept in this city with the greatest solemnity by the magistracy, and the citizens in general, "The mayor and corporation, in their scarlet robes, attended by the city companies, with their ensigns, went to the College to hear a sermon, after which the magistrates received the sacrament, and distributed money to the poor." This account presents a pleasing picture of simplicity of manners and pious gratitude.

The destruction of the Spanish fleet was indeed a proper subject for the exultation of the English; had the ambitious project of the Catholic monarch for the subjugation of England, been successful, the most cruel persecution that bigotry could devise, would undoubtedly have inflicted misery on the people; but the signal defeat of this mighty armament established the security of the kingdom for ages.

Queen Elizabeth was now in the zenith of her glory, swaying the sceptre over a free, gallant, and grateful people, surrounded by heroes and sages whose wisdom and valour were devoted to her service, and commanding the admiration or the awe of surrounding nations. Spain, baffled and defeated, was unable to renew hostilities; France, torn by intestine commotions, was incapable of hostility against this country; Scotland was under the dominion of a youthful sovereign, who, naturally pusillanimous, and consequently pacific, felt no inclination to disturb the Queen of England, from whom he expected the bequest of the crown of this kingdom; and even the Pope himself, whatever might be his animosity against Elizabeth, was unable to contend with her without the aid of Spain, or some other potent Catholic kingdom. As for the infant republic of Holland, it was devoted to the cause of England, as far as the rivalship of a maritime state would permit.

During this period of general tranquillity in England, the arts and manufactures of the country made a successful progress ; the queen, who was a zealous patriot, and intent on the prosperity of her people, was extremely frugal of the public money ; hence taxes were few, trade good, and the community enjoyed the fruits of prosperous industry, without being subject to the exorbitant exactions of statesmen. The happiness of the people became proverbial, and "*the golden days of good Queen Bess*" were afterwards the topic of national praise and regret, during the tyrannic government of the House of Stuart. Queen Elizabeth endeavoured to promote the prosperity and commerce of several small sea-ports in England, doubtless under the influence of the purest patriotism ; among others, the towns situated on the banks of the Severn were made independent ports ; and the following petition was presented by the corporation of Bristol to her majesty's council, entreating the repeal of a grant so ruinous in its consequences to this city.

" Brystowe is soytuated in an angle betweene the counties of Somerset and Gloucester, mayntened only by the trade of merchandizes, and making and ventinge collored cloths for the sea, made in Bristowe and in Somersetshire, wherewith many thousands of handy craftsmen have been set a worke and mayntened, and they have also great store of ledde out of Somersetshire, with which their trade of merchandizes they have alwaies sufficiently furnished all the counties adjoining to the said river, as also all towns and counties lyinge upon and near aboute the river of Severn, and the creeks of the same, as farre inwarde towards the land as to the town of Shrewsbury.

" There is belonging to Bristowe, between Somerset and Gloucestershire, a sufficient port for shippes of all burdens to ryde and fleete in, wherein hath bynne buildyd and maynten'd from time to time as many great serviceable shippes as in any poorte in this her majesty's dominion (London excepted,) and there have been broughte and trayned uppe as many and skilful maryners

as to suche shippinge should belong, and more which serve in divers other places.

“ There have been belonging to the sayde cityes and poorte of Bristowe, tyme oute of mynde (as the records of the Exchequer doe prove and shewe, and for th’ advoydinge of dyversitye of accomptes so confirmed) all the creeke upon the river of Severn inwards towards the land, as Barkeley, Gatcombe, Newenham, Gloucester, Tewkesburye, and all other the creeks and pills extending as farre upward as Wygorn, bye and thorough which creeks the sayd city had their chefest vente for all manner of forren merchandizes as farre as Shrewesburye, and from the same creeke also the sayde citye and citizens have had their chiefest provision of graine and other victualles.

“ Out of the said city by reason of their trades, portes, and creekes, the queen’s majesty receaveth yerely, for feefarms, fifteenes, customs, subsidies, impostes, and other duties, great somes of money, and the shippes of the sayde city and citizens have had their chiefest provisions of graine and other victualles.

“ But so yt is, right honourable, that all the said creekes (uppon an untrew suggestion), byn by her majesty’s letters patent, of late taken from the said city and porte of Bristoll, and are become a poorte of themselves to the imynente ruin of the said city, impoverishinge of the said artificers, anayne of the shippinge and mariners, hindrance of the queen’s majesty’s customs, duties, and profits, bringinge and raisinge of dearth and scarsetye, encouraging and encreasinge of pyrotts, and other great inconveniencies.

“ The parliament house, anno 34, Hen. VIII. was enformed and well understood how grayne was convayed over the seas by small barkes of the river of Severn, and the rode for shippes greatlie hurte by castenge oute ballaste, and taking in corne which came out of the creekes, and therefore

for the better searche and restraynte appoynted the same to be brought and measured at Bristoll, before it should be transported.

“ Gloucester is no place for trade or merchandize, because they have no lawfull wares meete to be transported in shippes servicable, or defensible to transporte and retorne merchandize if they had any.

“ Gloucester standeth uppon other good trades and concourse of people, whereby they have been well mayntened ; but yf they adventure any thing at sea, the same is in small barkes with corne and prohibited wares, wherewith they make more profitable retournes then Bristoll wythe there great shippinge and lawful wares can doe.

“ Gloucester standeth between Bristoll and Wigorn Warr’ (i. e. Warwick,) Coventry, and Shrewburie, and all other places upp Severn, where the merchants of Bristoll did usually make their vente of such commodities as they bringe from beyond seas ; but yf the same continues a poorte, they doe not only serve themselves, but also those other counties and towns aboute them, and so the trade of Bristoll and their great shippes, when the vente of their commodyties is taken from them must consequently decaye.

“ The more tradinge or discharginge places, the greater concealmente and stelthe of her majesty’s customes, and conveyinge awaie of prohibyted wares in small barkes, and therefore was yt provided for in the statute and decree, that nothing should be laden or discharged upon Severn, but only at Bristoll, and certain small places whereof the officers of Bristoll had special charge, as by the same more at large doth appere.

“ The chefest place of ladinge and discharging for Gloucester was a place called Gatcombe, which is sixteen miles downewardes the sea, before the officers

of Gloucester, and within little as near to the porte of Bristowe, which is between them and the sea; and this hath not depth of water, but for a shippe of fiftie tonnes, which cannot come thither laden but at highe springe tydes in fayre wether, with a good pylott, and cannot continue ther many yers without spoyle and ruin, and no officer dwelling nigher than Gloucester; neither is it anie town or popelous village to discrie or understand, howe her majestie is deceaved, and the county spoyled of grayne.

“ It is more conveniente that the creeke upp Severn do belong to the port of Bristoll, and be under their controllement, then to Gloucester, or be a port of themselves, because Bristoll standeth in nede of the grayne and victualls, which Gloucester and the counties upon Severn do abound in and can spare.

“ When the deputies of Gloucester delivered their books to the officers of Bristoll, they were then able to find their Orforders, and to reforme them, mete with them, and staye their passage, which now they cannot do.

“ The barkes upp Severn be so small, that they pay no tonnage to the peere of Dover according to the statute, as appeareth by their books, and their owners be corn-merchants and fermers; and these small barkes will shippe away, come and goe at every meane tyde, and so may deceave as much as they will, yf the officer of Brystowe have no authoritye to meet and searche them.

“ The city of Brystowe, which in time past hadd the most part of their grayne from upp Severne, have not had, within three yeres after the erection of the custom-house at Gloucester, ten quarters of wheat from them, and have been restrayned of grayne to come to Bristoll; so as when they have occasion, they must nowe travell to Gloucester for a cockett, and there put in sureties; and yf they obtayne it, the same is not without great difficulty, which is a great overthrowe, and chaunge to the said city of Bristoll.

“ Irishe men also with their barkes have found a directe trade to Gloucester, and all to shippe away corn, and soe we lose the benefit of their commodyties, and the utteringe of our owne, another great decaie to us.

“ The servicable shippes of Bristoll have and must serve her majestie upon all occasion, to their great hindrance and charges, and in the meane time the said barkes of Severne are free, and do spoyle the countrie of grayne and victualls, for they are out of the controllment of Bristoll, which do lack the same corn and grayne.

“ When the creek of Severne belonged to Bristowe, their corn, grayne, and victualls came from thence by cocket from Bristoll, ordinarylie taken out by the trowe men upp Severne, and then was her majestie for the victuallinge of Ireland, and for other services, redely and well provided at Bristoll, but now her charges upp Severne to provide together the same is great; as by the book of the purveyor for their service apereth; and great exactions been at Gloucester for cockett and other fees, for where before the charge of cockett and certificate was but two shillings and eight pence, yt is now five shillings and eight pence, besides fee, and the countrie upp Severne will be as well in everie respect eased by a deputation at Gloucester, as by the custome-house, and for less charges by two shillings and eight pence in a cockett, of which exaction the trowmen uppe Severne have often complained and exhibited supplications to the mayor of Bristoll.

“ The trade and shippinge of Bristoll is already so decayed by reason of the premises, that they have done awaye and must do awaye their great shippinge, and have offered the same to be sold, to their great losse; for although the great shippes be more worthier and servicable, yet are the small sort more profitable for the merchants, and better chape to be fraghted, and will turne and winde in narrower places, &c.

“ In tender consideration whereoff, and forasmuch as the erectinge of the newe porte doth and is lyke to decaye, the said citye of Bristoll, and stop the vente of our English lawfull merchandizes, decrease and demenishe the great sheppynge of Bristowe, and the maryners to them belonging; stope and chooke the vente and utteraunce which the sayd city hath had upp Severne with their forrene merchandizes, demenishe her highness’ customes, and profits, and raise a dearth and scarsetye in this commonwealthe, and of the other side no profit or benefit comparable to the last of these.—May it please your honnors, of your accustomed regarde in suche urgente distresses, to be a meane to her majestie, that the said letters patent may be repealed, and the seyde city and port of Bristowe be restored to their auntyent estate, for in the begynnyng of these decayes we thinke it not our part to be silent.”*

The grievance complained of in this petition was afterwards redressed by the revocation of a charter so injurious to the prosperity of the second sea-port of the kingdom, so prejudicial to the revenue of the state, and of such comparatively inconsiderable benefit to the many small cities and towns to which it had been granted.

An instance of skill and enterprize in the nautical art, which occurred in the year 1590, deserves to be recorded. Richard Ferns, a waterman of London, engaged for a considerable wager to sail in his wherry from that city to Bristol, in the course of twelve months. Accordingly, he set sail from London on the 24th of June, and on the 23d of August following arrived at Bristol, under sail, when the tide was at half-ebb, and landed at the farther slip at the Back. His wherry was immediately carried on men’s shoulders to the Tolzey, and deposited in a storehouse, as a curiosity. The fortunate navigator was congratulated by the populace on his arrival; he performed his solitary voyage

* Harleian MS. No. 368.

in eight weeks and four days, and afforded a memorable proof of the extraordinary success which often attends human enterprise and perseverance.

The variety of the benefactions of benevolent citizens of Bristol, at this period, was demonstrative of the benign effects of that strict morality enjoined by the Christian religion, and practised during the auspicious reign of Elizabeth with particular purity. Several gifts and bequests of pious individuals contributed to the relief and comfort of the diseased and necessitous in this city, the population of which continually increased; and in 1590, the Guants Church in College-green was given by Mr. Carr, a merchant of Bristol, for an hospital to be founded for forty poor girls, to be admitted from the age of eight to ten years, and lodged, boarded, clothed, and instructed, till they were eighteen. It was called the Queen's Hospital, in honour of her majesty. Among its principal benefactors was Mr. Bird, who gave £500. towards its establishment, disbursed money for the fee simple of the house and orchards adjoining for a lodging and play-ground for the children, and during his mayoralty, obtained permission of the merchants to lay a toll during eight years, on the following commodities: for every ton of lead landed on St. Mary Redcliff Hill, four-pence; for every ton of iron landed for sale on the Back or Quay, four-pence; and for every frail of raisins, two-pence. This toll was carefully collected.

During a general dearth throughout the kingdom in the year 1596, the mayor and corporation of Bristol manifested their philanthropy and prudence, by a regulation for the relief of the necessitous, according to which every burgess in proportion to his property, supplied a certain number of the poor daily with provisions. This was avowedly adopted to prevent an insurrection, and preserve the indigent from famine. The price of wheat was twenty shillings a bushel, and of malt and rye ten shillings. This year was also memorable for a successful expedition of the English against Spain. Queen Elizabeth having received information that the Spanish monarch was again making preparations to invade

England and Ireland, she fitted a fleet of one hundred and fifty ships of war and transports, which were joined by twenty Dutch ships, and commanded by Admiral Howard. The command of the land forces embarked in this expedition was given to the celebrated Earl of Essex. This fleet, to the equipment of which the citizens of Bristol readily contributed, sailed from Plymouth in June; and on the twentieth day of the same month, they attacked the Spanish fleet in the harbour of Cadiz, and, after an engagement from day-break till noon, compelled the enemy to abandon their ships, which they set on fire. The *St. Matthew* and *St. Andrew*, two Spanish ships of war, were captured, and all the rest of the fleet destroyed. In the meantime, the English troops landed from the transports, and after a conflict of several hours, Cadiz was surrendered to them by a capitulation, according to which the citizens agreed to pay seventy thousand ducats to the victors. Besides the merchantmen destroyed by Sir Walter Raleigh, at Port-Real, the King of Spain lost two galleons, taken by the English, eleven ships of war, and twenty-three merchant ships richly laden. The loss was estimated at twenty millions of ducats, and the victorious English seamen and soldiers returned to their native country with a vast treasure. This second blow convinced Philip of the absurdity of attempting the conquest of England; but Queen Elizabeth, in order to provide for the future security of the state, augmented the royal navy in 1599, to thirty-five ships of war of different rates.

The queen, who was distinguished for affability to her subjects on all occasions, had been induced, by the petitions of individuals, to grant them her letters patent, securing their exclusive right to trade in particular commodities. This species of monopoly, which was detrimental to the general welfare of the community, being loudly complained of, her majesty, in the year 1601, annulled those grants, an act of patriotism which was so pleasing to the Commons, that a deputation of eighty members waited on her with their thanks. Her answer to their address is remarkable, and justly defines the principles by which she

was actuated. "I owe you" said her majesty, "heartly thanks and commendations, for your singular good will to me, not only in your hearts and thoughts, but which you have openly expressed and declared, whereby you have recalled me from an error proceeding from my ignorance, not my will. These things had undeservedly turned to my disgrace, had not such harpies as these been made known and discovered to me by you. I had rather my heart or hand should perish, than that either my heart or hand should allow such privileges to monopolists, as may be prejudicial to my people. The splendour of regal majesty hath not so blinded mine eyes, that licentious power should prevail with me more than justice. The glory of the name of a king may deceive princes that know not how to rule, as gilded pills may deceive a sick patient. But I am none of those princes: for I know that the commonwealth is to be governed for the good and advantage of those that are committed to me, not of myself to whom it is intrusted; and that an account is one day to be given before another judgment-seat. I think myself most happy, that by God's assistance I have hitherto so prosperously governed the commonwealth in all respects; and that I have such subjects, as for their good I would willingly leave both kingdom and life also. I beseech you, that whatever misdemeanours and miscarriages others are guilty of by their false suggestions, may not be imputed to me: let the testimony of a clear conscience entirely in all respects excuse me. You are not ignorant that *princes' servants are oftentimes too much set upon their own private advantage; that the truth is frequently concealed from princes, and they cannot themselves look narrowly into all things, upon whose shoulders lieth continually the heavy weight of the greatest and most important affairs.*"

In 1602 Lady Ramsey, the wife of Sir Thomas Ramsey, Lord Mayor of London, gave one thousand pounds for the further maintenance of the children of the Queen's Hospital, in Bristol. To this benefaction the Corporation added £450. with which they purchased lands of the value of £90. per annum.

On the 24th of March, 1603, Queen Elizabeth died, in the 45th year of her reign, to the general regret of the nation; and on the 28th of the same month, her successor, the King of Scotland, was proclaimed at the High Cross in Bristol, by the name of James I. This ceremony was attended by the mayor and aldermen, in their scarlet gowns, and all the city companies under their proper ensigns. The two sheriffs in their scarlet gowns stood in the High Cross, with his majesty's picture placed over their heads in the sight of the populace. After the proclamation, the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses, went to St. Nicholas' Church to hear a sermon.

By the accession of King James, the two kingdoms of England and Scotland were united under the name of Great Britain. In the first year of his reign a pestilential disease began its ravages in Bristol, where it continued upwards of a year, during which there died 2440 persons of the plague, and 516 of other distempers, according to the list of burials kept in the church books.

On the 20th of January, 1607 at high water, this city was inundated, insomuch that in St. Stephen's, St. Thomas's, and Temple Churches, the water was half way up the seats; the arches of the bridge were filled, but it did not injure the houses. The water rose five feet at Trim Mills. In the marshes near the Severn, both on the English and Welsh coast, the sea broke over the banks of that river with such impetuosity, that it drowned all the cattle, and carried away the corn and hay. The people, to save their lives, climbed to the tops of their houses, and those who were in the fields were obliged to climb upon the trees. In the beginning of August, the same year, another inundation overflowed all the low grounds near the Severn, and continued in the fields to the depth of six feet. Many persons who had climbed on trees for security, continued in that perilous situation two days. The mayor of Bristol, when informed of their distress, sent boats to their assistance. In Bristol, at the Back, it rose four feet and a half above the streets, all the lower part of

the city was covered with the flood, and the merchants and tradesmen had goods to a considerable amount damaged by the water in their warehouses and cellars. But the most memorable circumstance relative to this city, in 1607, was a severe frost, which commenced on the 20th of November, and lasted to the 8th of February in the following year. The rivers Severn and Wye were so completely frozen over, that the navigation was entirely stopped. People made fires and dressed their victuals on the ice of the Severn, and amused themselves with several rustic pastimes. At the thaw, the broken ice was carried by the tide into Kingroad with such violence, that it did much damage to the shipping that lay at anchor.

In 1608 a dreadful dearth prevailed, and thousands must have perished of famine, had it not been for the seasonable supplies of grain imported into this kingdom. The imports of corn from Dantzic, and other places, into the port of Bristol, were immense. It appears from the custom-house books, that from the 23d of July, 1608, to the 24th of July, 1609, no less than six hundred vessels, laden with grain, entered this port. The quantity imported was,

Of Wheat,	34,629 Bushels,	valued at 5s. per Bushel,	£8,657.	5s.
Of Rye,	73,770 ditto.....	4s.....	14,754.	0s.
Of Barley,	4,040 ditto.....	3s.....	606.	0s.
112,439			£24,017.	
			5s.	

Wheat was sold for some time at 6s. 8d. a bushel, and rye at 5s. 4d.; but an abundant harvest reduced the prices, and wheat was sold at 4s. a bushel before the end of the year. The frequency of dearth in England, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is a proof of the unskilfulness or indolence of the English agriculturist, for lands were not rated high. In 1544, good lands let in England at one shilling per acre; and the art of gardening, which had been introduced into this country from the Continent nearly forty years prior to that

period, must have been productive of great benefit to the community long before the accession of King James I. The inglorious reign of that worthless prince was indeed undistinguished by any act of patriotism; national glory was sacrificed to his indolence and cowardice, and his obstinacy respecting prerogative, was the foundation of that arbitrary system which terminated with the tragical death of his successor. Prince Henry, his eldest son, who died in his minority, from the early indication which he gave of superior talents and heroism, would probably have been worthy to have reigned over this island; but James himself, by pusillanimous concessions to foreign states for the preservation of peace, while he lavished the public money on worthless favourites, excited the just contempt both of his own subjects and foreigners.

In 1612, the city of Bristol was honoured with a royal visit; and the following description of the ceremonies and amusements which took place on that occasion, are described with a simplicity characteristic of that period, and the love of show which was then one of the favourite gratifications of the English nation.

“ On the 4th of May, 1612, Anne of Denmark, wife to the king, came from Bath to this city, accompanied by the Earl of Worcester, and the mayor, with all the magistrates and common council, in their scarlet robes, with the recorder, did ride two and two on horseback, in their foot cloaths, accompanied by the chief masters of the several trades, with their hoods, unto Lawford's Gate, when Mr. recorder made a very handsome oration. The mayor presented her majesty with a rich embroidered purse of gold, and then with all the magistrates, took horse again, the last common-councilman did ride first, and the mayor did ride bare-headed before her majesty's coach, with a chain of gold about his neck. When they came up Wine-street, all the trained soldiers of the city stood along each side of the street, every one according to his ability, having their apparel suitable to their colours, with hats and feathers, and white doublets, every one

by his dress seeming to be a commander rather than a private soldier. After the mayor and council had brought the queen to her lodgings, (which was at Sir John Young's,) upon their coming back; all the trained soldiers drew to the quay, and loaded every one his gun, and fired a volley, by a private notice from the Earl of Worcester, who was at an house on the quay; then they marched to the Green, before the queen's lodgings, and fired another volley; they then left her, leaving an honourable guard at her majesty's lodgings.

“ On Sunday, the 6th of June, the mayor, with the council in their scarlet gowns, came on foot to bring her majesty to the College to hear a sermon, the mayor walking before the coach bare-headed, with a chain of gold about his neck. But the sword of state was not carried before the mayor; in honour to the queen, all the trained soldiers attended, and the queen was accompanied in the coach by the Earl of Worcester, and the Lord Bishop of Wells. Dr. Robson, Dean of Bristol, preached, and the queen returned to her lodgings in the same state that she was conducted therefrom. And the next day, to shew the queen some diversion, there was a sham-fight on the river at high water, against the mouth of the river on the Gibb; and there was built a place in Cannon's Marsh, finely decorated with ivy-leaves and flowers for her majesty to sit in, and see the fight. And when the time came, the mayor and aldermen, in their gowns, did bring her majesty thither, they riding before in their foot cloaths; and having placed her majesty, a ship came up under sail and cast anchor, and drew their ensigns upon their top-masts, making obeisance to the queen. After that they spread their flags again, and up came two galleys of Turks, and set upon the ship, and there was much fighting and shooting on both sides. The Turks boarded the ship, and were put off again with loss of men; some of the Turks running up the main-top-mast to pull down the flag, were thrown overboard into the river, whilst the ship's side did run over with blood. At last the Turks were taken, and presented to her majesty, who, laughing, said, “ they were not only like Turks by their apparel, but by their

countenances." This fight was so excellently performed for the time, that it delighted her majesty much, and she said " she never saw any thing so neatly and artificially performed." Afterwards she was conducted to her lodging by the mayor, aldermen, and trained soldiers. It was surprizing to see the company that attended at this exhibition.

" The next day, being Tuesday, about two o'clock, her majesty left Bristol, being attended to Lawford's Gate by the mayor and corporation. The mayor then took his leave of her on his knees, and the queen presented him with a diamond ring worth sixty pounds, which he wore about his neck hung by a chain of gold. The queen expressed great satisfaction at her entertainment here, and was pleased to say, that she never knew she was queen till she came to Bristol."

The citizens of Bristol had hitherto been undistinguished for their progress in literary attainments, but in 1614, Doctor Tobias Matthews, Archbishop of York, established the City Library, in the Marsh. This prelate was born on Bristol-bridge, and was a celebrated and eloquent preacher. The books presented by him to the citizens of Bristol, were expressly " for the use of the aldermen and shopkeepers." Mr. Robert Redwood was the builder of the Library, and the Reverend Richard Williams was the first librarian. Hence with the successful extension of manufactures and foreign commerce, literature and the sciences also became inmates of Bristol.

In 1615, several old houses were taken down near the west end of St. Nicholas's shambles, and a fish-market established; a new public walk was made near All-Saints Church; the Tolzey was rebuilt on a more extensive plan, and the windows made higher. These improvements, which marked the progress of the citizens in opulence and refinement, also contributed to the beauty and salubrity of the city. An instance of invincible obstinacy was this

year evinced by a felon confined in Newgate, who when brought to his trial refused to be tried by his country, and was remanded to prison, where he was pressed to death according to law.

In the year 1623, the Corn-market was built in Wine-street, where a well was sunk, and a pump set up for the public accommodation, at the expence of the city Chamber. Soon after the accession of King Charles I. he granted a charter to the citizens of Bristol, by which the Castle, with the walls, banks, ditches, houses, gardens, &c. within its precincts, were for ever separated from the county of Gloucester, and made part of the city and county of Bristol. According to this charter, the Castle of Bristol was thenceforward to be within the jurisdiction, and subject to the authority of the mayor, sheriffs, coroners, and justices of the city; no officer of the county of Gloucester was to intermeddle in its municipal government; and all the inhabitants of the Castle were admitted to a participation of the privileges of the burgesses of Bristol, the king reserving his right to all his tenants within the said Castle, as his demesne or parcel of the possessions of his crown. This charter was granted on the 13th of April, 1630, in the fifth year of the reign of King Charles I. And by another charter, dated the 26th of October, 1631, "the king, in consideration of the sum of £951. paid by the mayor, burgesses, and commonality of the city of Bristol, into the Exchequer at Westminster, which was acknowledged in full discharge for ever, of all that grant made by his majesty to the said mayor, &c. of all his castle of Bristol, with all its rights, members, and appurtenances whatsoever, in reversion of three lives of John, Gillian, and Nathaniel Brewster, granted to Francis Brewster, the 23d of August, in the second year of the reign of King Charles I. 1626, under the yearly rent of one hundred pounds." After this grant, a new armoury was built in the Castle, and in 1634, the corporation of Bristol purchased of John Brewster his estate, and one life more to come of the Castle, for £520.—The Castle was granted to the city in

fee farm, at £40. per annum, for the queen's life*, as a recompence for the public services of the burgesses in billeting soldiers, furnishing shipping to

* Prior to the period that the burgesses of Bristol thus obtained possession of the Castle of Bristol, it had become an intolerable nuisance to the city. Being out of the jurisdiction of the magistracy of the city, and distant from the residence of any magistrate for the county of Gloucester, the castle became the rendezvous of thieves, robbers, and other lawless desperadoes, who escaped out of Bristol to elude justice, and pursued their nefarious practices with impunity.

The most remarkable events which occurred in Bristol Castle from the time that it became a royal demesne, A. D. 1173, to the date of the abovementioned purchase, including four hundred and sixty years, have already been detailed in this work in chronological order. A list of the Governors or Constables of the Castle during that time, is now annexed for the satisfaction of the antiquarian.

King John, in the sixth year of his reign, conferred on John le Warre, the honour of Gloucester, the Castle of Bristol, and the manor of Brislington.

In 1224 Henry III. nominated Ralph de Willington, governor and constable of this Castle, and warden of the chace of Keynsham.

In 1234, William, son of Hugh Lord Talbot, had custody of the Castle of Bristol.

In 1260, Roger de Leeburne was appointed Constable of the Castle of Bristol, and he was succeeded in this office by Bartholomew de Inovenice, in 1264.

In the year 1271, John de Musegres was constable of this Castle, in which office he was succeeded A. D. 1289. by Peter de la Mare, who rendered an account to King Edward I. of £23. 9s. 10d. in lieu of price of beer belonging to the Castle as part of its profits.

In the reign of Edward I. Bartholomew Badlesmere was, for his exploits during the wars with Scotland, promoted to the rank of a baron, and made governor of the Castle, town, and barton of Bristol. His nephew and heir, Roger Bygod, had a grant from King Edward, of the Castles of Bristol and Nottingham, to hold for life.

In the reign of the unfortunate Edward II. his favourite minister, Hugh Spencer, Earl of Winchester, was left by the fugitive king, as governor of the Castle of Bristol. His surrender and execution have already been mentioned.

In the year 1336, Richard de Kyngheston was constable of this Castle.

In the 35th year of the reign of Edward III. Edmund Flamberd was appointed by Queen Phillipa to the office of Constable of Bristol Castle, with a fee of £20. per annum; and on his resignation, the queen nominated Robert de Foulhurst his successor, which was confirmed by the King.

In 1366, Hugh de Legrave was appointed by King Edward III. governor of this Castle for life; and in the year 1370, John de Thorp succeeded to that office, and continued in it to the 3d year of the reign of Richard II.

In 1413, Henry IV. constituted Hugh Lutterel constable of the Castle of Bristol.

In 1442, Sir John St. Loe was made constable of the Castle of Bristol for life, and in 1444, King Henry VI. granted the manor and hundred of Bristol to Henry de Beauchamp, in reversion from the death of Humphry, Duke of Gloucester.

transport them to Ireland, and fitting out ships of war to cruise against the pirates which then infested the coast. The citizens of Bristol had disbursed £1,100. in billeting soldiers.

The following curious anecdote is recorded of Mrs. Cary, a widow, who lived on the Back, in Bristol, in the year 1631. Having been terrified by several frightful apparitions of King Charles I. who appeared in black, with his head off, and his crown covered with blood, she went to London, and was introduced by the Earl of Dorset to his majesty. When she informed the king

During the reign of Edward VI. Sir Humphry Stafford was appointed constable of the Castle of Bristol, and of several of the king's forests, including Kingswood.

In the 4th year of Edward VI. 1550, Sir William Hubert was granted the custody of Bristol Castle.

In 1549, during the tumults about religion, the walls of the Castle and City of Bristol were repaired, cannon mounted, and proper guards placed, which prevented an insurrection.

In the glorious reign of Queen Elizabeth, Sir John Stafford, knight, was, as a reward for his valour, granted the constableness of Bristol Castle. It appears, however, that he was negligent of his office, for immediately after the accession of King James I. a petition was presented to the Privy Council, on the 6th of March, 1602, complaining, "that Sir John Stafford, Knight, Keeper of his Majesty's Castle of Bristol, being seldom or never resident there, but leaving a mean and unworthy resident in his stead, hath of late time suffered many poor and indigent people, to the number of 49 families, consisting of about 240 persons, to inhabit within the said castle, who for the most part are persons of lewd life and conversation, and in no way able to relieve themselves but by begging and stealing, to the great annoyance of the citizens, the rather for that the said Castle being exempted from the liberties of the city, though it standeth within the body of the same, doth serve for a refuge and receptacle of malefactors, as well of the city, as others that fly thither to escape justice: it was thought and ordered to the petitioners humble request, that for avoiding the present inconvenience, and preventing the like for the future, the Lord High Treasurer of England, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, calling the said John Stafford before them, should take order for removing the persons then residing in the said Castle, into such places where they last dwelt, and also that there be not hereafter any more admitted to inhabit there, but only such as Sir John Stafford will undertake for their sufficiency and good behaviour, to the end the city be not further charged or molested by them, or his Majesty's Castle pestered with any such base cottagers, or scandalous inmates."

It appears from a record of the offices and fees of the king's household in 1606, that the salary of the Constable of Bristol Castle was only £20. which was the sum paid in the reign of Edward III. so that it was rather a post of honour than emolument.

Such are the principal facts respecting the government of Bristol Castle, while it remained independent of the city.

of her visions, he dismissed her with this observation, "Take her away, she is a merry woman." Mrs. Cary returned to Bristol, where her mind was again disturbed by a repetition of her visions, which induced her to go to London a second time. On her arrival in the capital, she was informed that the king was gone to York, whither she went, and was admitted to another interview with his majesty, whom she earnestly importuned to reflect on what she had seen, but was again discredited, the apparition being supposed the effect of a distempered imagination. It is, however, remarkable, that a fanciful woman forewarned the king of his danger eleven years before the commencement of hostilities between him and the parliament, and prior to those arbitrary acts of the king, which compelled the people to take up arms in defence of their liberties.

The unjustifiable exactions of Charles I. were very offensive to the people in general, but the tax called ship-money was particularly unpopular. In 1635 the city of Bristol paid £25,000. for customs; and soon afterwards the corporation contributed the sum of £2,163. 13s. 4d. towards the equipment of a fleet against France and Holland. But notwithstanding their liberality, the merchants of Bristol were, in 1638, harassed by commissioners and pursuivants, who examined them on oath respecting their imports and exports. Tradesmen and manufacturers were also compelled to pay heavy imposts; soap-makers paid a duty of £4. per ton on soap, and brewers were obliged to pay forty marks per annum for a licence. Several opulent merchants of Bristol went to London to petition the king for redress; they were graciously received by his majesty, who expressed his regret at having granted oppressive commissions, in consequence of having received wrong information, and gave them permission to prefer a bill against the commissioners in the Star-chamber. But after considerable delay, the trial remained undetermined; yet the king advised them to continue the prosecution, promising to act as mediator. The grievances of the merchants, however, remained unredressed, and they returned to Bristol much incensed at those unjust exactions of his majesty's ministers, which at length led to a civil

war, that harassed the inhabitants of England for some years, and terminated in the decapitation of the sovereign, and the subversion of the state.

The importance of Bristol, both as the second city of the kingdom, commanding the county of Somerset, and the principal entrance into Wales, rendered the possession of it of the utmost consequence in the event of a war; and when the civil commotions began to assume a formidable aspect, in 1642, the castle and city walls were repaired, by an order of the magistrates, and at the expence of the corporation. A fort on Brandon-hill, and another on St. Michael's-hill, afterwards called the royal fort, were erected, planted with cannon, and united to the principal fortifications by lines of communication.

At the commencement of hostilities between the king and parliament, the nation was divided into parties, insomuch that there was scarcely a town but contained different partisans. Bristol, in common with the rest, was also divided into political factions; but the preponderant influence seems to have been hostile to the sovereign; for towards the close of 1642, when Sir Ferdinando Gorges, and Mr. Smith, of Ashton, were sent by Lord Paulet, to request the admission of cavalry into Bristol, it was refused by Richard Aldworth, the mayor. Soon afterwards, Sir Alexander Popham approached the city with five hundred cavalry, which he intended to have augmented by a reinforcement of four hundred more, to take possession of Bristol for the parliament. But the corporation refused him admittance, and stationed parties of the trained bands, to the number of one hundred men, armed with pikes and muskets, at the different gates, which were strengthened by port-cullises. The fortifications of the castle being repaired, several pieces of heavy ordnance were planted on the strong wall of the principal tower, to annoy besiegers at a considerable distance, and smaller cannon were placed on different forts, for the protection of the city.

Soon afterwards Colonel Essex, who commanded the parliamentary forces at Gloucester, being secretly invited by some of the citizens of Bristol to come and take possession of the city, he approached it on the 5th of December, 1642, with a considerable army. But the gates were immediately shut against him; the citizens appeared in arms, and the mayor and common council met at the Tolzey, to devise the best means for the defence of the city. Their deliberations were, however, interrupted by the mayor's wife, and several other women of distinction, who presented a petition, requesting the corporation to admit the parliament's army. Their importunities eventually prevailed, for on the following night the gates were opened to Colonel Essex, who marched into the city with two regiments of infantry, and took possession of the castle in the name of the parliament.

The new governor, Colonel Essex, was a man of gaiety and dissipation, a character ill adapted to enforce that strictness of discipline requisite in a garrison. An intimation of his negligence, and the consequent danger to which the city was exposed, having been transmitted by some of the principal citizens to parliament, the governor was arrested, and the command given to Colonel Fiennes.

“ About the 6th of March came information by letters from Bristoll, that Colonel Essex had so ill demeaned himself there, that the honest and well-affected inhabitants of the citie were both weary and afraid of him, and of his government, because he spent his time in little else but drinking, feasting, dancing, riotous gaming, and such like vain and profane living. Wherefore to rid themselves of him, they caused him to be invited (whereunto he was easily intreated) to feast and dance in a house some distance from the citie, where being mighty joviall and merry, in the midst of his cups, he was suddenly apprehended by Colonel Fynes, (son and heir to that noble and pious peer, the Lord Sey) and his troop of horse, and presently by them carried prisoner from thence,

first to Berkeley Castle, and afterwards to the citie of Gloucester, where he was kept in safe custodie."

It appears that party spirit was at a great height in Bristol at this period, and the friends of the popular cause were so turbulent, that those citizens who were royalists found it dangerous to appear in the streets, and if they passed the boundaries of the city, they were seized as disaffected persons, and sent prisoners to Taunton or Berkeley Castle.

On the 16th of February, 1643, Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes, at the head of five troops of cavalry, and five companies of infantry, entered Bristol, and assumed the title of governor of the city and castle. On the 27th of the same month, Sir Edward Hungerford came with his forces, the castle was made a garrison for the parliament, and strengthened with additional fortifications; to defray the expence of which, the citizens were compelled to pay a heavy contribution, amounting to £55. 15s. a week, assessed on their lands, goods, money at interest, and stock in trade. This tax was to last for three months, or till the king's troops were disbanded; and it was confirmed by act of parliament. At this period, the city of Bristol supplied Sir William Waller with a considerable body of recruits for his army; but while he proceeded in the reduction of several towns in Gloucestershire and Herefordshire, an association or conspiracy was entered into by some of the principal inhabitants of this city, to open the gates to the king's forces, under the command of Prince Rupert.

The principal persons concerned in this plot were Mr. Robert Yeomans, Mr. George Bouchier, merchants; Mr. William Yeomans, Mr. Edward Dakes, Mr. Arundel, Mr. Teague, Thomas Barret, cutler; John Nickens, trunkmaker; Ephraim Goody, goldsmith; Mr. Millard, Mr. Collins, Mr. Brent, Mr. Blackborough, Captain Cole, Mr. Thrompe, Cowley a quack, and Green an

attorney, John Pester, Thomas Luphens, Matthew Stephens, Nathaniel Street, tiler, Henry Russel, and others.

On the 7th of March, at night, Prince Rupert, Prince Maurice, and Lady Digby, with 4,000 cavalry, and 2,000 infantry, were to advance to Durdham Down, half a mile from the city, on the Gloucestershire side; and the royal adherents in the city engaged to seize Froom-gate and Newgate, for their admission. Blackborough, who lived near Froom-gate, was to give a passage to the king's forces through his garden. The signal was to be the tolling of a bell, at St. Nicholas's, St. John's, and St. Michael's Churches. The bell at St. Nicholas's was to be a signal to those who were to attack the mainguard, near the High Cross and Tolzey; the bell at St. John's to those who were to seize Froom-gate, and the bell at St. Michael's to the troops under Prince Rupert to act in concert with their friends in the city. The royalists were to be distinguished by white tape in their hats, inscribed with the word Charles.

According to agreement, about fifty of the conspirators met in arms at Mr. Yeoman's house, expecting to be joined by a number of butchers from the shambles near St. Nicholas-gate. Robert Yeomans, who was nominated colonel in the king's service, was to march with this party to attack the mainguard, and post a strong body of forces at St. Nicholas-gate, to prevent any attack from the garrison stationed on the other side of the bridge, in Somersetshire.

Mr. Bouchier was to command the party that was to seize Froom-gate, at the tolling of St. John's bell, in which he was to be assisted by the seamen from St. Augustine's Back. Then was the bell at St. Michael's on the hill to be tolled, and the royal army immediately to march down to Froom-gate and Blackborough's garden, while their friends in the city broke open the house of Humphry Hooke, mayor, and having killed him and his family, and seized the

keys of the city gates, were to open them to their confederates. Those citizens who did not wear white tape, and other marks of their loyalty, were to be plundered and massacred.*

About an hour before this conspiracy was to have been put in execution, a man came to the guard at the bridge-foot, and said he saw several men go into the house of Mr. Robert Yeomans. It was then twelve o'clock at night. In a few minutes the house was invested by a party of the soldiery, the entrance was forced, and a number of men found in arms, who were immediately apprehended, and escorted to the castle. Mr. Bouchier being also a suspected person, his house was searched, and another party found there in arms. Prince Rupert advanced, according to the projected scheme; but hearing no tolling of the bells, after waiting four hours, he approached with some cavalry to Brandon-hill, but a few shot from the Fort compelled him to retire.

The following written proclamation was found in the house of Mr. Yeomans:—"All inhabitants of the Bridge, High-street, and Corn-street, keep within your doors upon peril of your lives. All other inhabitants of this city who stand for the king, let them forthwith appear at the High Cross with such arms as they have, and follow their leaders."

According to the account given by Mr. Barrett, the two principal conspirators, Mr. Robert Yeomans, and Mr. George Bouchier, were treated with great severity, being chained by their necks, and confined in a dungeon in the Castle, for several weeks, without permission to converse with their nearest relations. They were tried by a court-martial, in the house of Mr. Robert Rogers, at the Bridge, and sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, which was put in execution on the 30th of May, in Wine-street, at the Nag's Head door.

* Parl. Chron. p. 278.

During the time these unfortunate citizens lay under sentence of death, King Charles made great exertions to save them. His Majesty first sent a letter by General Ruthen, to the governor of Bristol, with a menace, that if these citizens were put to death, several partisans of the parliament, who were his prisoners, should also suffer a similar punishment; but colonel Fiennes, in his answer, pointed out the difference between prisoners of war, and spies or conspirators. After this unsuccessful application, the king wrote a letter to Mr. York, the mayor; Mr. William Colston, and Mr. Henry Creswick, sheriffs; in which he told them that the execution of Yeomans and Bouchier, "would call down the just vengeance of God, and bring perpetual infamy on the city, he therefore willed and commanded them to raise all the power and strength of the city to rescue them." But this royal mandate was disregarded, and the culprits suffered the rigour of martial law. Indeed it was unreasonable to suppose that the municipality of Bristol would venture to act in open defiance to the governor of this city, especially when "the mayor was a puritan, and the governor a presbyterian."

The execution of two respectable citizens, and the severity with which the contributions were exacted by governor Fiennes, exasperated the inhabitants of Bristol, and intimations of this general discontent being communicated to the king, he was encouraged to besiege the city.* Accordingly, on the 22d day

* A few days before this city surrendered to Prince Rupert, the following letter was sent by Colonel Fiennes, the governor, directed to Mr. Gunning the younger.

"Bristol,—Whereas this city is at this time environed, and in great and imminent danger to be swallowed up by many cruel and barbarous enemies of papists, Irish rebels, and others; and most of the inhabitants of this city have, and all ought to take an oath of protestation for defence thereof, with their lives and fortunes. These are to require you forthwith to pay to my servant Ralph Hooker, to be employed for the defence of the city, the sum of two hundred pounds; which sum, in respect of your estate, is below the proportion required of other persons of your quality, by an ordinance of parliament. And if you shall refuse in this time of so great necessity, you may expect whatever the desperate resolution of soldiers, reduced unto extreme necessity, may put them to act against your person and estates, unless by a speedy contribution towards their supply, you shall prevent the same. Given under my hand, July 25, 1643.

NATH. FIENNES."

of July, 1643, Prince Rupert came before Bristol with an army of twenty thousand men, and having summoned the garrison to surrender, which was refused, he immediately besieged the city, and the same day, with the assistance of the seamen, according to a preconcerted plan, he seized all the shipping that were in the harbour, laden with goods of great value, which were put on board by the citizens for greater safety.

On the 23d of July, Prince Rupert reconnoitred the out-works, which he found but indifferently fortified; it was therefore resolved, at a council of war, to proceed by assault. The attack in the Somersetshire side, was led on by Prince Maurice and the Marquis of Hartford; several of the assailants scaled the wall; but, by the vigorous defence of the garrison, they were repelled with great slaughter. On the Gloucestershire side, where Prince Rupert commanded in person, the royalists were successful; for Colonel Washington having discovered a weak part in the curtain between Brandon-Hill and Windmill forts, out of the reach of the cannon shot of the besieged, he entered, and his pioneers soon made a sufficient passage for the cavalry. Thus Prince Rupert pressed forward to Froome-gate with the loss of five hundred men, who were shot by the inhabitants from the walls and windows. This resolute progress of the royalists compelled the governor into a capitulation, in the articles of which it was stipulated,—

“ 1. That none of the citizens should be molested in their persons or goods.

“ 2. That every officer should march forth with his arms.

“ 3. That every trooper should ride out with his horse and his sword.

“ 4. That every soldier should march away with his sword, bag, and baggage.

“ 5. That a safe convoy should be allowed for twenty miles.”

The articles of this capitulation were wantonly violated by the royalists, who even stripped the soldiers of the garrison of their clothes. Colonel Fiennes, the governor, was afterwards tried by a court martial, for cowardice, and condemned to die, but he was reprieved by the Earl of Essex, who mitigated the sentence to banishment for life.

According to the account of this siege given by a noble historian,* “ There were in the town 2,500 foot, and a regiment of horse and dragoons. The line about the town was finished, yet in some places the graff was deeper than in others. The castle was very well prepared and supplied with great store of provisions to endure a siege.”

The royalists found in the military stores 1,700 barrels of gunpowder, with proportionate match and bullets, sixty pieces of brass cannon, and a great number of muskets and pikes; eighteen ships in the river, belonging to the merchants, and four ships of war belonging to the parliament, that came with supplies of ammunition to the garrison. The citizens paid £1,400 of a contribution to prevent the city from being plundered; and by a royal proclamation the soldiery were forbidden to plunder on pain of death. When Sir Arthur Ashton communicated the news of this important victory to King Charles, who was then at Oxford, his Majesty ordered public thanksgivings on the joyful occasion. At a council of war, and council of state, it was agreed to send Sir John Pennington, speedily to Bristol, to take the command of the ships, and a proclamation was issued inviting all mariners that were willing to serve the king, and promising that those should have their pardon who had served under the Earl of Warwick, and that the arrears of their pay due by him should be immediately paid at Bristol, with his Majesty's pay and favour for the future.

* Lord Clarendon in his History of the Rebellion, vol. II. p. 295.

According to the quaint humour of the age, an account of the victorious progress of the royal forces, on the 31st of July, 1643, was given in the following rhymes:—

Bristol taking,
Exeter shaking,
Glocester quaking.

Prince Rupert, with part of the royal army, to the number of 900 cavalry, and 4000 infantry, having taken possession of the city and castle of Bristol; the King, accompanied by Prince Charles, and the Duke of York, came to this city, on the 3d of August, and appointed the victorious Prince Rupert, governor. During his Majesty's stay in this city, he lodged at the house of Mr. Creswick, in Small-street, the beautiful gothic architecture of which is yet entire. Towards the close of the year 1643, letters patent, of which the following is a copy, passed the great seal, appointing the military establishment of this garrison.

“ Charles, by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. To our trustie and welbeloved s'vant Edward Turnor, Esq. the th'rer of our garrison of Bristoll, Bathe, the Towne and Castle of Berkley, Nunney Castle, Farley Castle, and Portshall Pointe, lying and being within our severall counties of Som'sett, Glocester, and the citie and countie of Bristoll. Whereas for the good and safetie of our people, we have thought fitt to plan and settle sev'all garrisons in our cities of Bristoll and Bathe, the Town and Castle of Berkley, Nunney Castle, Farley Castle, and Portshall Point, and for the well ordering, fortifying, manneing, and maynteyning of the said several garrisons, have thought it likewise fitt, by the advice of our Councell, to cause an establishmt of contribuc'on to be made, settled, assigned, and set out, to and for the mayntenance of the garrisons aforesaid, and the officers and soldiers there. As also an establishmt of a constant pay and allowances to be made, issued forth, and allowed weekly to such troopes and regim'ts of horse and foote, and sev'all officers and souldiers

of the same, and for divers other ends and purposes, tending to our service, the mayntenance and safetie of our said garrisons in such sorte as by one schedule, signed with our sign manuall, bearing the same date with theis presents hereunto annexed, doth and may appeare. And we doe further order and assigne two hundred pounds by the weeke to be duely and constantly paid out of such moneys as shall arise and become due out of the customes, by the hand of the officer or officers of our customes, for the use and better mayntenance of our said garrisons. Now, to the end our good inten'cons for the safetie of our garrisons aforesaid, and all our loving subjects there, may have a good effect, by a due execu'con of the said establishmt in all parts thereof, as it is intended by us, Wee reposing espe'iall trust and confidence in your abilitie, integretie and good inclina'con to our said s'vice, have ordained, constituted, and appointed, and doe by these presents ordain, constitute, and appoint you, the said Edward Turnor, to be our th'rer for our said garrisons of Bristoll, &c. giving you hereby full power to acte and perform whatsoever upon the plan of th'rer of our said garrisons doth and may in any sorte belonge or app'rteyne. And you, the said Edmund Turnor, are to com'ence and beginne to be th'rer of our garrisons aforesaid, for the receiving, collecting, and issuing forth, all the said sev'all somes of money from the first of November last past. And the better to enable you, the said Edmund Turnor, for the p'formance of our s'rvice aforesaid; WEE do hereby will and require all our sheriffs, commissioners, justices of peace, maiors, bayliffes, high-constables, and petit-constables, and all other our officers, ministers, and other loveinge subjects whatsoever, in our severall counties of Som'sett, Wiltes, and Gloucester, and our citie and countie of Bristoll, to be ayinge and assisting to you, your sufficient deputies, collectors, or assignes, and every of you, in receiving, leaveying, collecting, and gathering the contribuc'ons of the severall and respective hundreds, cities, townes, villages, and places menc'oned in the said schedule hereunto annexed. And WEE doe hereby further com'and that all high constables, and petit-constables, and all other p'sons whatsoever, whome

these may concerne, doe yield obedience and forthwith execute all such warrants as they, or any of them, shall, from tyme to tyme, receive from you the said Edmund Turnor, as th'rer of our said garrisons, or any of your deputies, collectors, or assigns, authorized by you, touching or concerning the leavying and receiving all such somes of money as shall arise and growe due by way of contribuc'on, which somes of money soe leavied and received by them, they, the said high constables, petit-constables, and all others whatsoever, whome it concerned as aforesaid, are to bring in and convey to such places, and to such p'sons, and att such tymes as you, the said Edward Turnor, your deputies, collectors, or assigns, shall appointe and direct, and hereof they nor any of them, may att any tyme faill, under such paine and penalty as shall be inflicted upon them by a councell of warre; and for defaulte of paym't of the aforesaid contribuc'on, wee doe also hereby require and com'and all our officers and soldiers within or belonging to our said garrisons, from tyme to tyme, to give their best assistance in sending forth such parties of horse or foote, as you shall think fitt and necessary for the due leavying and collecting of the contribuc'ons aforesaid. And you, the said Edmund Turnor, are, from tyme to tyme, to issue forth and pay out of all and every such some or somes of money as shall be raised and leavied, as well out of the contribuc'ons as the customes aforesaid, to such p'sons, and according to the order and forme for the paym't of the said sev'all garrisons expressed and set forth in the said establishm't hereunto annexed. And you are hereby alsoe required to demeane and behave yourself in the said place of tre'r, and to p'forme and execute such orders and instruc'cons as you shall receive from us, bearing the same date with theis p'sents, and all such further orders and instruc'cons as you shall from tyme to tyme receive from us. And for the execu'con of our said service, wee doe give, grant, and allowe to you, the said Edmund Turnor, thirteene shilling four pence p. diem, to you for two clerks, to each two shilling six pence p. diem, to you for eight collectors of the contribu'cons, to each four shilling p. diem, to three keepers of the stores or magazines for provisions and

victualls, to each three shilling four pence p. diem. And likewise we doe hereby give allowance for books, bagg, paper, inke, pens, and all such other necessities as our said service shall require; all which said severall allowances shall be allowed unto you uppon your accompt; and for soe doing this shall be your sufficient warrant. In witnes whereof wee have caused theis our l'res to be made patent. WITNES ourselfe att Oxford, the fourth day of December, in the twentieth yeare of our Raigne p. ip'm. Regem."

WILLYS.

" CHARLES R.

" AN ESTABLISHMENT for Bristoll, comprisinge Bath, Berkeley Castle, Portshall Pointe, Nunney and Farley Castles dependant thereof, to com'ence and beginne the first of November, 1644.

" Three regiments of foote, 1,200 in each regiment, officers and all, each regiment to bee paid accordinge to theise ensuing particulars, viz.

PER WEEKE.

To a Colonel	£05 00 00
To a Lieuten't-Colonel	04 03 04
To a Sergeant-Major	03 16 08
To a Captaine	02 10 00
To a Lieuten't	01 08 00
To an Ensigne	00 18 00
To a Gentleman of Armes	00 08 00
To a Corporall	00 05 00
To a Drum'e-Major	00 08 00
To a Drum'er	00 05 00
To a Quarter-master	01 00 00
To a Chaplaine	01 00 00

PER WEEKE.

To a Provost-Marshall £01 00 00

To a Chirurgion 02 00 00

To a Carriage-Master 00 18 00

To a Com'on Souldier 00 03 06

After which rate, three regiments

of foote, their pay amounteth

weekly to 833 17 10

“ A regiment of seaven troopes of horse, consistinge of 60 horse to each troope, officers and all, and his highness' troope of horse, consisting of 200, besides officers, to bee paid according to the ensuing particulars:

PER WEEKE.

To a Colonell £07 00 00

To a Lieutenant-Colonell 06 00 00

To a Sergeant-Major 05 10 00

To a Captaine 05 00 00

To a Lieuten't 03 00 00

To a Coronet 02 05 00

To a Quarter-master 01 10 00

To a Corporall 01 01 00

To a Trumpeter 00 17 06

To a Chirurgion 00 17 06

To a Chaplaine 01 08 00

To a Trooper 00 10 00

After which rate, one regiment

of horse their pay amounteth

weekly to 352 02 00

His Highness' troope of horse,

their paye weekeley 120 17 00

“ The chief officers of the sev’al garrisons to be paid weekly as followeth, viz.
The Governour, the Treasurer, to supply his charges.

	PER WEEK.
The Lieuten’nt-Governour . . .	£21 00 00
The Deputy-Governour	10 00 00
The Major	05 00 00
The Com’issary-General or Mus- ter-Master	03 10 00
The Quarter-Master-Gen’all . . .	02 06 08
The Engineir	02 06 08
The Petardier or Engineir for Fire-works	05 00 00
The Provost Marshall	02 06 08
The Keeper of the Stores	01 00 00
The Proviant Mr	01 00 00
The Governour of Bathe	07 00 00*

* Short notices respecting the garrisons subordinate to Bristol, in 1644.

Bath was garrisoned in the early part of the civil wars for Charles I. and £7,000. were expended on its fortifications; but it soon became one of the principal posts of the parliamentary forces. Sir W. Waller lay there a considerable time with his whole army: but after the battle of Roundway Down, in 1643, the king’s troops retook possession of the city without difficulty. It was then included in the Bristol establishment; but was given up by Sir Tho. Brydges, in July, 1643, previous to the surrender of Bristol.*

Berkeley Town and Castle, in Gloucestershire, the chief strength of which consisted in the outworks and church, was delivered up to the parliamentary forces by the gallant Sir Charles Lucas, the 25th of September, 1645, after a vigorous defence of nine days.†

Nunney Castle, three miles S. W. of Froom, in Somersetshire, had in it a large magazine; but was taken by the parliamentary army, after a siege of two days, and burnt to prevent the possibility of its future service to the king, September 8, 1645.‡

Farley Castle, Somersetshire, surrendered to the parliamentary army September 15, 1645.§

Portshall, or Portshead Point, in Somersetshire, a fortification commanding King’s Road, in the Bristol Channel, surrendered to the parliamentary army on the 28th of August, 1645, after six days resistance; and thus the communication with the channel by water was cut off, previous to the siege of Bristol.

* Collinson’s Somersetshire, I. 30. † Anglia Rediviva, ut supra. ‡ Anglia Rediviva. § Collinson’s Somersetshire, II. 217.

PER WEEKE.

The Governour of Berkeley . .	£07 00 00
The Governour of Portshall-Pointe	05 00 00
The Governour of Nunny Castle .	05 00 00
The Governour of Farley Castle	05 00 00
The Treasurer	04 13 04
To him for eight Collectors . . .	11 04 00
To him for two Deputyes	03 10 00
To him for two Clerkes	01 05 00
To him for three Keepers of the Magazine of Victualls	03 10 00

To the Gunners, and other inferiour Officers, as followeth, viz.

	Master Gunner . . . £02 06 08 PER WEEKE.
Waterfort, Ordinance	John Greenfield, Mr Gunner . . . 00 17 06
7.	Richard Abbot, Mate 00 14 00
	To three Gunners, each 10s. . . . 01 10 00
Brandon-Hill Fort,	Francis Pitt, Mr Gunner 00 17 06
Ordinance,	Henry Gosse, Mate 00 14 00
6.	To two Gunners, each 10sh. . . . 01 00 00
Great Forte,	John Skinner, Mr Gunner 00 17 06
Ordinance	John Sherland, Mate 00 14 00
22.	To six Gunners, each 10sh. 03 00 00
	Com'issary of Victualls. 01 10 00
Redoute. Ordinance	Walter Daniell, Mr Gunner . . . 00 17 06
7.	John Gilburte, Mate 00 14 00
	To two Gunners, each 10sh. . . . 01 00 00
Prior Hill	Joseph Tucker, Mr Gunner 00 17 06
Ordinance,	William Howlett, Mate 00 14 00
13.	To three Gunners, each 10sh. . . . 01 10 00
Lafford Gate	John Simonds, Mr Gunner 00 17 06
Ordinance	John Jones, Mate 00 14 00
7.	To six Gunners, each 10sh. 03 00 00
Temple,	James Fuller, Mr Gunner 00 17 06
Ordinance	John Scott, Mate 00 14 00

	PER WEEKE.
14. Redcliffe, Ordinance	To five Gunners, each 10sh. . . £02 10 00 John Sterrey, Mr Gunner 00 17 06 Richard Hamans, Mate 00 14 00
15. Castle and Newgate, Ordinance	To four Gunners, each 10sh. . . 02 00 00 John Robert, Mr Gunner 00 17 06 John Warden, Mate 00 14 00
16. Frome Gate, & Pithay Gate Ordinance,	To eleaven Gunners, each 10sh. . 05 10 00 Com'issary of Victualls 01 10 00 William Purser 00 14 00 William Crookebank 00 14 00
2.	
For makinge of Armes and Ammun'con	£350
For finishinge the Workes	219
Which is to be raised upon the Assigna'cons following, viz,	
Out of the Hundreds of Som'sett hereunto annexed, rated	
weekly att may yield	850
Out of the Hundreds of Wilt'es hereunto annexed, rated	
weekly att may yield	500
Out of the Hundred of Gloucester, being the whole Division	
of Berkeley, rated Weekly att but may yield . .	300
Out of Bristol, hereunto annexed, rated Weekly at	150
Out of the Customes	200

“ The Hundreds of Som'sett, beinge the east division to bee established for the several garrisons aforesaid.

Bartcliffe cum Bedminster.

Portbury.

Bren cum Wreinton.

Bempston.

Winterstoke.

12 hides cum Glaston.

Welsford cum Burgo.

Whitston.

Chew.

Chewton.

Keynesham.

Bathford cum Burgo.

Hainxton cum Claverton.

Wilbey cum lib'tat Hosethorne.

Froom cum lib'tat.

Almersdon cum lib'tat.

Catsash.

Norton Ferryes.

Brewton cum Burgo.

“ The Hundreds of Gloucester, beinge the whole division of Berkeley, to be established for the garrisons aforesaid.

Berkeley Hundred.

Crumbaldash Hundred.

Lanley cum Swinshed Hundred.

Thornebury Hundred.

Henbury Hundred.

Puckle-Church Hundred.

Barton Rs. Hundred.”

By this establishment, the treasurer had full power to demand such force as he might judge necessary to compel the payment of contribution to the garrison, subject only to his majesty's directions: thus the commission was held independent of any intermediate authority.

The sums which were payable in each county appear already in the schedule ; the only particulars which the author of this communication is possessed of, are as follow :

“ Hundred of Radcliffe cum Bed-
minster payeth £200 PER MONTH.
£. s. d.

Long Ashton	40	0	0
Bedminster	40	0	0
Barron	20	0	0
Batcombe and Rigilberry	20	0	0
Backwell	33	6	8
Chelby	6	13	4
Winford	40	0	0

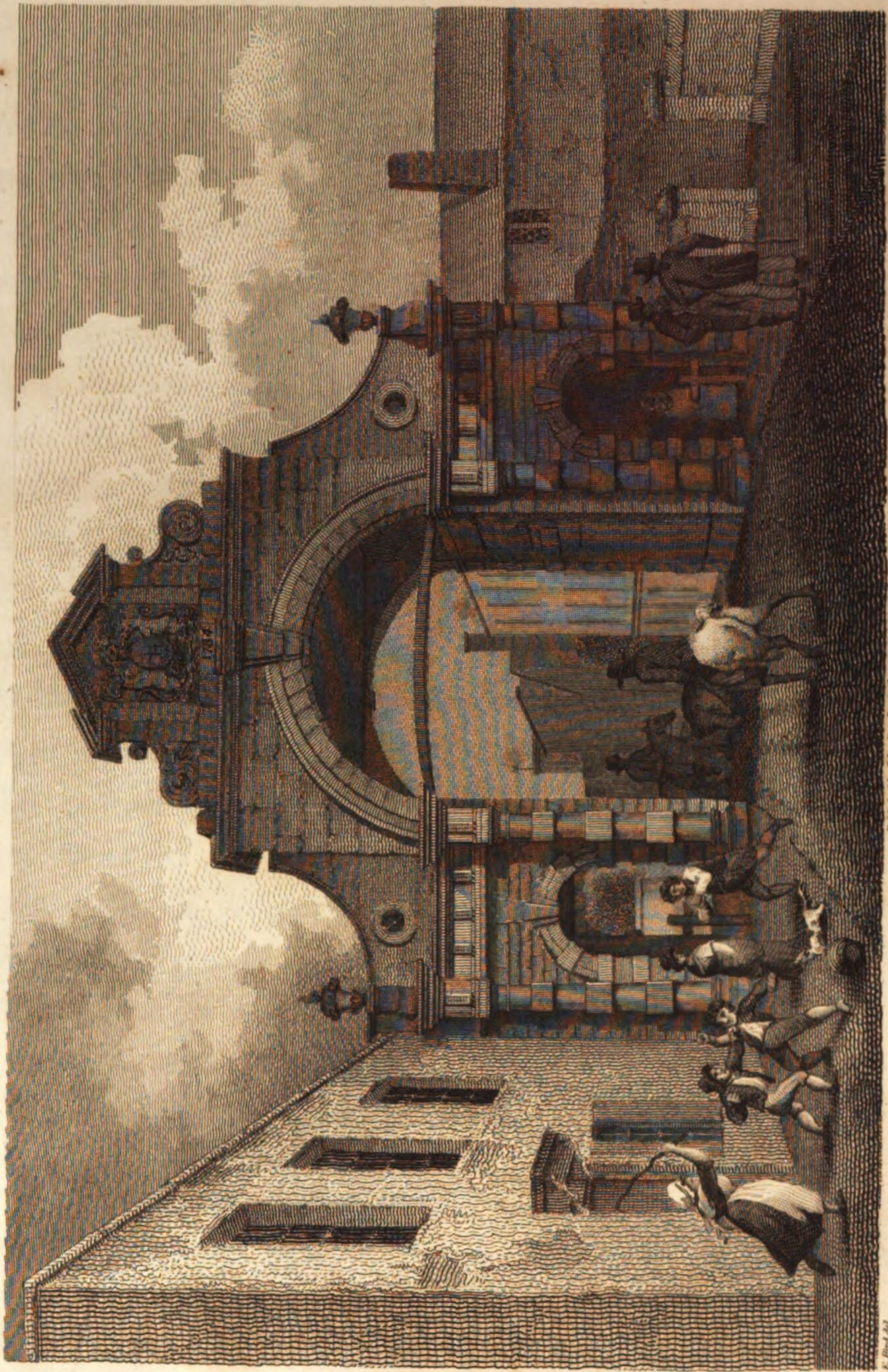
£200 0 0

Portbury Hundred :

Wraxall and Fayland	25	0	0
Naylsie	18	15	0
Broxton	6	5	0
Walton	7	2	4
Portbury	31	0	6
Abbots Leigh	16	10	8
St. George's	16	17	0

£121 10 6”

Vestiges of the outworks of Bristol, beginning at the spot where the water-
fort was built, near the glass-house, in Limekiln-street, may yet be traced to



TEMPLE GATE.
Bristol.

where Brandon-Hill fort stood, and thence to the south-east corner of Berkeley-square. The line was continued by the west end of Park-street to the royal fort near the seat of Thomas Tyndall, Esq. and thence to Mr. Carden's garden near the Montague tavern, where remains of the redoubt, or Colston's fort, are still perceptible, and so on to Prior's-hill fort near the north end of St. James's Place and Somerset-street; thence by Stoke's Croft, across the river Frome to Lawford's-gate, and onward to the bank of the Avon opposite Tower Harratz, whence the line of fortification extended by where Temple and Redcliff gates stood, to another part of the bank of the Avon, which completed the line of four miles in circumference. The works from Prior's-hill fort to Lawford's-gate were not five feet high, and the highest work of the royal fort not quite twelve feet. The ditch or trench which surrounded the works did not exceed seven feet wide, and five feet deep.

A line of fortification so imperfect, extensive, and inadequately defended by artillery, was insufficient for the protection of Bristol; but as the garrison was supported by precarious monthly contributions raised in the city and its neighbourhood, the governor was not censurable for the weakness of the works. The civil war between the king and parliament affords indeed a memorable instance of the evils of despotism. Had King Charles been satisfied with the constitutional means of increase, he might have lived glorious and died lamented. The best defence of a prince is the affection of the people; towers, cannon, and guards, sink beneath the energy of a nation roused in defence of its liberties; and although a despot may, with temporary glory,

" Comet-like, flame lawless through the void,

" Destroying others, by himself destroy'd,

history clearly demonstrates how short, and how fatal, is the career of power, actuated by the folly of ambition, and the enormity of injustice.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

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CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

DURING the time that Prince Rupert was governor of Bristol, the fortifications of the city and castle were strengthened, and the peaceful pursuits of commerce interrupted by warlike preparation and discipline. While the city continued in possession of the royalists, its trade suffered annoyance from the fleet belonging to the parliament; though in some instances the commanders of ships of war manifested their attachment to the king, and detached themselves from the enemies of royalty. In the month of January, 1644, a new ship, called the *John*, of London, belonging to the English merchants who traded to the East Indies, was brought to Bristol by Captain Macknelly, his officers, and ship's crew, for his majesty's service. This ship mounted twenty-six guns, and contained £17,000. in money, besides several valuable commodities. The Prince of Wales came to this city on the 10th of March following, and conferred the honour of knighthood on Captain Macknelly. This was the only remarkable occurrence in this city during a period of more than two years that Prince Rupert continued governor. The army under Fairfax and Cromwell came before this city in the month of August, 1645, and after a siege of several days, it was taken by storm. The following are the authentic particulars of this memorable siege, during which the inhabitants of Bristol were in a state of

peculiar calamity, being at once exposed to the miseries of war, and a terrible pestilence, of which no less than one hundred and fifty persons died in a week.

“ After reducing Sherborn, Bristol being considered as the only considerable port the king had in the whole kingdom, for shipping, trade, and riches, and also a magazine for all sorts of ammunition and provisions, it was resolved to march thither for reducing that city.

“ Two thousand horse were sent before, under Commissary-General Ireton, to preserve the towns adjacent to Bristol from plunder and firing, for the better accommodation of our quarters ; and advice was sent to Vice-Admiral Captain Multon, riding about Milford-Haven, to send ships into King-road, to block up Bristol by sea, as this army intended to go by land.

“ Thursday, August 21, General Fairfax and Lieutenant-General Cromwell, went and viewed the town, which was now approached, appointed guards and quarters on the west side of the river, and quartered themselves at Kainsham that night, where divers lords sent for passes to come out of the city to go beyond sea, but were all denied.

“ Friday, 22, a general rendezvous of horse ; all this day spent in setting guards on Somerset side, where the country men maintained a passage, the head-quarters being this day removed to Hanham.

“ Saturday, 23, Fairfax and Cromwell employed the whole day in settling the quarters and grounds on the other side Bristol. The cannon played this day from the great fort, and Prior's-hill fort, but hurt none but one dragoon, who had his thigh shot off. The head quarters removed to Stapleton.

“ August 24.—The Lord's day. A sally out of the sally-port, near Prior's-hill fort, repulsed by Colonel Rainsborough's brigade and horse.

“ Tuesday, August 26.—A third sally on Somerset side, on a post of Colonel Welden's, at Bedminster, ten killed, and as many wounded. Sir Bernard Ashley, a royalist, taken, and died a few days after of his wounds.

“ Thursday, 28.—The fort of Portishead Point, after four days siege, taken, with six pieces of ordnance, by which means a communication was laid open with the ships in Kingroad.

“ Friday, 29.—A fast observed by the army to ask God for a blessing upon the designs against Bristol. Mr. Del and Mr. Peters kept the day at the head-quarters, but were disturbed by a sally about noon upon the quarters at Lawford's Gate; three or four soldiers taken.

“ August 31.—Captain Moulton, from Kingroad, held a meeting with the general, and offered to assist in storming the city with his seamen.

“ Monday, September 1.—Prince Rupert, with 1,000 horse, and 600 foot, sallied out about twelve at noon, the sixth time, in full career, upon our horse-guards, with much fierceness, and were made to retreat very hastily; Captain Guilliams killed, and Colonel Okey taken by Prince Rupert. Orders given to view the line and works, and the soldiers to make faggots, and all fitting preparations for a storm.

“ September 2.—After a council of war held, it was determined to storm Bristol; and the manner was referred to a committee of the colonels to present in writing to the general next morning, to be debated in a general council of war, which was agreed to be in the following manner. Colonel Welden, with his brigade of four regiments, were to storm in three places on the Somerset side; 200 men in the middle; 200 on each side as forlorn hopes to begin the storm; twenty ladders to each place; two men to carry each ladder, at twenty

shillings each. Each of the musketeers that followed the ladder to carry a faggot; a serjeant to command them, and to have the same reward. Twelve files of men, with fire-arms and pikes, to follow the ladders to each place where the storm was to be; those to be commanded each by a captain and lieutenant, the latter to go before with five files, the captain to second him with the other seven; the 200 men appointed to second the storm to furnish each party of them twenty pioneers, who were to march in their rear, the 200 men commanded each by a field officer, and the pioneers each by a serjeant; (those pioneers were to throw down the line to make way for the horse;) the party that was to make good the line to possess the guns, and turn them; a gentleman of the ordnance, gunners, and matrosses, to enter with the parties; the drawbridge to be let down; two regiments and a half to storm in after the foot, if way was made. Much after this manner was the general brigade under Colonel Montague's command, consisting of the General's, Col. Montague's, Col. Pickering's, and Sir Hardresse Waller's regiments, to storm on both sides Lawford's-gate, both to the river Avon, and the lesser river Froom; the bridge over Froom to be made good against horse with pikes, or to break it down. Colonel Rainsborough's brigade, consisting of his own, Major-General Skippon's, Colonel Hammond's, Colonel Birche's, and Colonel Pride's regiments, to storm on this side the Froom, beginning at the right hand of the sally port up to Prior's-hill fort, and to storm the fort itself as the main business; 200 of this brigade to go up in boats with the seamen to storm Waterfort (if it could be attempted;) one regiment of horse, and a regiment of foot, to be moving up and down in the closes before the royal fort, to ply hard upon it, with a field-officer to command them; the regiment of dragoons, with two regiments of horse, to carry ladders with them, and to attempt the line of works by Clifton and Washington's breach.

“ Such was the manner of storm agreed on; the cannon baskets were ordered to be filled, seamen and boats sent for, and on the 4th of September, the weather which had been extremely wet before, begun to alter, and the great guns

began to play from the new battery against Prior's-hill Fort. The following summons was also sent to the governor of the city.

To PRINCE RUPERT.

“ SIR,

“ For the service of the parliament, I have brought their own army before the city of Bristol, and do summon you in their names to render it, with all the forts belonging to the same, into my hands, for their use.—Having used this plain language, as the business requires, I wish it may be as effectual with you as it is satisfactory to myself, that I do a little expostulate with you, about the surrender of the same; which I confess is a way not common, and which I should not have so used, but in respect to a person of such sort, and in such a place: I take into consideration your royal and relation to the crown of England, your honour, courage, and all the virtues of your person, and the strength of that place, which you may think yourself bound and able to maintain. Sir, the crown of England is and will be where it ought to be; we fight to maintain it there; but the king, misled by evil counsellors, or through a seduced heart, has left his parliament and people, (under God, the best assurance of his family :) the maintaining of this schism is the ground of this unhappy war on your part; and what sad effect it hath produced in the three kingdoms, is visible to all men. To maintain the rights of the crown and the kingdom jointly, the principal part is, that the king, in supreme acts concerning the whole state, is not to be advised by men of whom the law takes no notice, but by the parliament, the great council of the nation, in whom (as much as man is capable of,) he hears all his people as it were, at once addressing him, and in which multitude of counsellors lies his safety, and his people's interest. To set him right in this hath been the constant and faithful endeavour of the parliament, and to bring those wicked instruments to justice, that have misled him, is a principal ground of our fighting. Sir, if God makes this clear to you,

as he hath to us, I doubt not but he will give you an heart to deliver this place, notwithstanding all the considerations of honour, courage, and fidelity, &c. because their consistency and use in the present business depends upon the right or wrongfulness of what has been said. And if, upon such conviction, you should surrender the city, and save the loss of blood, and the hazard of spoiling such a place, it would be an act glorious in itself, and joyful to us, for restoring you to the endeared affections of the parliament and people of England, the truest friends to your family it hath in the world. But if this be hid from your eyes, and so great, so famous, so ancient a city, so full of people, be exposed through your wilfulness in putting us to force the same to the ruin and extremity of war, (which yet we shall in that case as much as possible endeavour to prevent;) then I appeal to the righteous God, to judge between you and us, to requite the wrong; and let all England judge whether to burn its towns, and ruin its cities, and destroy its people, be a good requital from a person of your family, which have had the prayers, tears, money, and blood of this parliament; and if you look on either as now divided, both ever had the same party in parliament, and among the people most zealous for their assistance and restitution; which you now oppose and seek to destroy; and whose constant grief hath been, that their desire to serve your family hath been ever hindered, and made fruitless by that same party about his majesty, whose councils you act, and whose interest you pursue in this unnatural war. I expect your speedy answer to this summons by the return of the bearer this evening, and am,

“ Your Highness's humble servant,

“ Sept. 4, 1645.

THO. FAIRFAX.”

(ANSWER.)

“ SIR,

“ I received your's by your trumpet, and desire to know if you will give me leave to send a messenger to the king, to know his pleasure therein.

“ I am your servant,

“ RUPERT.”

(REPLY.)

“ SIR,

“ Your overture of sending to his majesty to know his pleasure, I cannot give way to, nor admit of so much delay as that would require; wherefore, thereby I cannot but understand your intention intimated not to surrender without his majesty's consent; yet because it is but implicit, I send you again to know more clearly, if you have any more positive answer to give from yourself, which I desire to receive; and which I desire may be such as may render me capable to approve myself

“ Your Highness's humble servant,

“ Sept. 5, 1645.

THO. FAIRFAX.”

“ From the 5th to the 9th of September, repeated propositions from Prince Rupert and General Fairfax were received and rejected; and, on the 10th, at two o'clock in the morning, the signal for the assault was given, by setting fire to some straw and faggots on the top of a hill, and firing four great guns from the general's station during the storm, which was an old farm-house opposite Prior's-hill fort. On the signal, the storm immediately began around the city, with all the combined horrors of darkness and carnage. Colonels Montague and Pickering, with their regiments, soon forced a passage at Lawford's-gate, where they seized the cannon, and made several of the garrison prisoners, Major Desborough advancing with the cavalry after them. Another brigade, commanded by Lieut.-Colonel Jackson, scaled the works between Lawford's-gate and the river From; while Colonel Rainsborough's and Colonel Hammond's regiments entered near Prior's fort. Major-General Skippon's and Colonel Birche's regiments, entered nearer to the river From; and the regiment commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Pride was divided, part being detached to attack Prior's fort, and part to alarm the troops in the Royal fort.

“ After the line was broke down by the pursuers, and a gap made in the same, the horse with undaunted courage entered, and within the line met with

a party of the enemy's horse, put them to a retreat, mortally wounded Colonel Taylor, of which wounds he died, and took divers prisoners. This so disheartened their horse, that they never came on again to give one charge, but retreated, and stood in a body under the favour of the great fort, and Colston's fort.

“ In the meanwhile Prior's-hill fort obstinately held out, playing fiercely with great and small shot on our men, for two hours after the line was entered ; our men all that time in like manner plying them hard with musket shot in at the port-holes, until they brought up ladders to the fort ; but it being an high work, many of the ladders proved too short, through which fault some that got up were beaten down again. Notwithstanding, this disheartened them not, but up they went again upon the greatest danger and disadvantage, some at last creeping in at the port-holes, and others got on the top of the works ; Captain Lagoe, of Lieutenant-Colonel Pride's regiment, being the first man that laid hold on the colours, and in the end we forced the enemy within to run below into the inner rooms of the work, hoping to receive quarter ; but our soldiers were so little prepared to shew mercy, by the opposition they had met withal in the storm, and the refusal of quarter when it was offered, that they put to the sword the commander, Major Price, a Welshman, and almost all the officers, soldiers, and others in the fort, except a few which at the entreaty of our officers, were spared their lives. All this was done between two o'clock and five in the morning.

“ Most happy it was that the storm began so early, for otherwise had the enemy had day-light when we first entered, we could not have attempted Prior's-hill fort, in regard this great fort, and Colston's fort on the one side, and the castle on the other, might have cut off all our men as fast as they had been drawn up ; but being in the dark, they durst not fire for fear of killing their own men ; their horse during the storm being drawn up between the great fort and Colston's fort : but on Somerset side, success was not answerable to that on this side, our forces there being put to a retreat, though they went on with

much courage; the works on that side were so high that the ladders could not near reach them, and the approach into the line of great disadvantage.

“ Lest during the storm the prince (in case he saw the town like to be lost) should endeavour to escape with his horse, to prevent the same, Commissary-General Ireton, Colonel Butler's, and Colonel Fleetwood's regiments of horse were appointed to be in a moving body upon Durdham-Down, that place being the most open way, and most likely for the prince to escape by; besides part of those horse did alarm that side of the line, and the great fort towards Durdham-Down and Clifton during the storm; as likewise to secure the fort, Colonel Okey's dragoons alarming Brandon-Hill fort, and the line towards Clifton.—About two hours after taking Prior's-hill fort, a trumpet came from the prince to desire a parley, which the general embraced *on account of the city's being set on fire in several places, and on condition of the fire being immediately stopt*: which was done accordingly, and so the treaty proceeded, and by seven at night was concluded according to articles.

“ I. That his Highness Prince Rupert, and all noblemen, officers, gentlemen, and soldiers, and all other persons whatsoever, now residing in the city of Bristol, and in the castle and forts thereof, shall march out of the said city and castle, and forts, with colours, drums, pikes, bag, and baggage. The prince his highness, gentlemen, and officers in commission, with their horse and arms, and their servants with their horse and swords, and common soldiers with their swords, the prince's life-guard of horse with their horse and arms, and 250 horse besides to be disposed of by the prince, and his life-guard of fire-locks with their arms, with each of them a pound of powder, and a proportion of bullet; and that none of the persons, who are to march out under this article, are to be plundered, searched, or molested.

“ II. That such officers and soldiers that shall be left sick or wounded, in the city, castle, or forts, shall have liberty to stay till their recovery, and then shall have safe conduct to go to his majesty, and in the interim to be protected.

“ III. That such persons above-mentioned, who are to march away, shall have sufficient convoy provided for them to such garrison of the king as the prince shall name, not exceeding fifty miles from Bristol, and shall have eight days allowed them to march thither, and shall have free quarter by the way, and shall have two officers to attend them for their accommodation, and twenty waggons for their baggage, if they shall have occasion to use them.

“ IV. That all the citizens of Bristol, and all noblemen, gentlemen, clergymen, and all other persons residing in the said city and suburbs, shall be saved from all plunder and violence, and be secured in their persons and estates from the violence of the soldiers, and shall enjoy those rights and privileges which other subjects enjoy under the protection and obedience to the parliament.

“ V. That in consideration thereof, the city of Bristol, with the castle, and all other forts and fortifications thereof, and all the ordnance, arms, and ammunition, and all other furniture and provisions of war, excepting what is before allowed, shall be delivered up to Sir Thomas Fairfax to-morrow, being Thursday, the 11th of this instant September, by one o'clock in the afternoon, without any diminution or embezzlement, his Highness Prince Rupert then naming to what army or garrison of the king's he will march.

“ VI. That none of the army, who are to march out on this agreement, shall plunder, hurt, or spoil the town, or any person in it, or carry any thing but what is properly his own.

" VII. That upon these articles being signed, Colonel Okey, and all persons now in prison in the city of Bristol, and the castle and forts of the same, shall immediately be set at liberty.

" VIII. That sufficient hostages be given to Sir Thomas Fairfax, and such as he shall approve this night, who are to remain with him until the city be delivered.

" IX. That neither the convoy nor officers sent with the prince shall receive any injury in their going and coming back, and shall have seven days allowance for their return.

" X. That upon delivering of the town, sufficient hostages be given for the performance of the articles on both parts.

" Signed by us, commissioners on the behalf of his Highness Prince Rupert,

" JOHN MYNNE,

" W. TILLYER,

" W. VAVASOUR.

" Signed by us, commissioners on the behalf of Sir Thomas Fairfax,

" ED. MONTAGUE,

" T. RAINSBOROUGH,

" JOHN PICKERING."

Such was the termination of the siege of Bristol. In the storm several of the parliament officers were killed, and many wounded. While Sir Thomas Fairfax, and Oliver Cromwell, were sitting on the top of Prior's-hill fort, a cannon-ball from the castle grazed upon the wall within a foot of them, but without doing them any injury.

On Thursday, the 11th of September, Prince Rupert marched out of the great fort, accompanied by eight lords, and several ladies and gentlemen. General Fairfax escorted his highness about two miles, and multitudes of the country people assembled to see the prince and his garrison marching off. Many of the spectators cried out, "*give them no quarter, give them no quarter,*" for the outrages committed by the garrison had provoked the people. Nay, it is even recorded that "the cause of sitting down before Bristol, was to prevent the plunder and cruelties of Prince Rupert in that country."* But this censure is too severe; the prince was a brave man, and as no particular instance is mentioned of his inhumanity, this misrepresentation of his character probably proceeded from party malevolence.

Bristol was an important acquisition to the parliament. In the city, castle, and forts, were taken 140 pieces of cannon, and 100 barrels of gunpowder. The great fort and castle had provisions for 150 men for 350 days. According to the account given by Mr. Creswick, the mayor, to Oliver Cromwell, the garrison consisted of 2500 infantry, 1,000 cavalry, and 1,500 trained bands and auxiliaries; but there marched out only 500 cavalry, and 1,400 infantry, the rest being killed, wounded, or having made their escape. The besiegers lost 160 men, including seven officers. Major-General Skippon was appointed governor of the city and castle; Mr. Creswick, the mayor, was displaced; and Mr. John Gunning, who had been sheriff in 1631, put in his office.

A short time before the siege of Bristol, King Charles, who was in South Wales, resolved to make this city his head-quarters, and had actually advanced to Chepstow, where he was met by Prince Rupert. But the irresolution which marked the councils of this unfortunate sovereign prevailed; he continued in Wales, and was levying troops for the relief of the garrison

* Whitlocke.

of Bristol, when he received the dreadful news of its surrender. Prince Rupert was severely censured by the king, in the following letter, written from Hereford.

“ NEPHEW,

“ Tho’ the loss of Bristol be a great blow to me, yet your surrendering it as you did is so much affliction to me, that it makes me not only forget the consideration of that place, but is likewise the greatest trial of my constancy that hath yet befallen me. For what is to be done, after one that is so near to me both in blood and friendship, submits himself to so mean an action? I give it the easiest terms such — — I have so much to say, that I will say no more of it, only lest rashness of judgment be laid to my charge, I must remember you of your letter of the 12th of August, whereby you assured me, that if no mutiny happened, you would keep Bristol for four months. Did you keep it four days? Was there any thing like a mutiny? More questions might be asked, but now I confess to little purpose. My conclusion is, to desire you to seek your subsistence, until it shall please God to determine of my condition somewhere beyond sea, to which end I send you herewith a pass, and I pray God to make you sensible of your present condition, and give you means to redeem what you have lost; for I shall have no greater joy in a victory than a just occasion, without blushing, to assure you of my being

“ Your loving uncle, and

“ Most faithful friend,

“ C. R.”

It is evident, however, from the particulars of the siege and surrender of Bristol, that the city was no longer tenable. During the storm the assailants obtained possession of the line and works to the extent of a mile on the strongest part of the fortification; the city was on fire in several places; the whole of Temple-street was burnt down, and Prince Rupert had no other

way left to save himself, the garrison, and the place, from total destruction, but by those very favourable articles of capitulation which he obtained. Yet the royalists were so dissatisfied, that he published a vindication of his conduct in a pamphlet, entitled, "A Declaration and Narrative of the State of the Garrison, and of the City of Bristol, in 1645." As this publication affords much information, respecting the state of Bristol, and its inhabitants, at the most important juncture recorded in its history, the following extract will doubtless prove interesting to the general reader, as well as the native citizen.

"On Prince Rupert's coming to Bristol, the constitution of the garrison had, by the establishment, contributions settled for 3,600 men, for that and the subordinate garrisons, at Nunney, Portsend Point, &c. but on his exacter enquiry, the presidiary soldiers which went for eight or nine hundred men, were really in the judgment of honest and judicious persons betwixt five and six hundred effective; the auxiliary and trained bands, by interruption of trade, and by the pestilence then raging there, and by poverty and pressures laid upon them, were reduced to 800; and the mariners betook themselves to other parts, or the enemy. The commissioners entrusted for the contribution and support of the garrison, abandoned the town upon the enemy's approach; and many considerable persons had leave to quit the town, which disheartened the rest. For securing the place, his highness drew in so many as to make 2,800 men upon sight. But after the enemy approached, he could never draw up on the line 1,500, and it was impossible to keep them from getting over the works, and many of those were new levied Welch, and inexperienced men. The line to be defended was above four miles in compass, the breast-work low and thin, the graff very narrow and of no depth, and by the opinion of all the colonels, not tenable on a brisk and vigorous assault. The great fort, which had the reputation of strength, lay open to Brandon-hill fort, which, if taken, would, from its height with the cannon, command the whole.

plain within it; and the want of water was not to be borne many days. For the like consideration of danger to the line from another part, his highness built a redoubt without, which on that side prevented the enemy from erecting a battery, as likewise three others during the siege, and drew a line of five hundred feet. After the misfortune which happened to Lord Goring's army, the loss of Bridgwater and Sherborn, and upon his majesty's sudden recess out of Wales, the prince conceiving it would be best for his majesty's affairs to remain here, and that the enemy's designs would be for Bristol after their former successes, he gave orders for all the inhabitants to victual themselves for six months; and upon strict survey, there were 2,500 families then remaining in the city, whereof 1,500, through indigence and want, could not provide for themselves. To supply this defect, 2,000 bushels of corn were imported from Wales; and on the certain approach of the enemy, all the cattle thereabouts were ordered to be drove in, by parties commanded out for that purpose. The ammunition was scant, considering there were in the forts, castle, line, and streets, above one hundred cannon mounted; the quantity of powder not exceeding 130 barrels, and at his highness's coming in, there were not musket-balls for three hours fight; therefore, he caused great quantities of lead to be cast into bullets; and the manufacture of match was quite down, and set up by his highness during the siege.

“ These preparations made the colonels of posts to be consulted about the tenableness of the line; their judgment was, that notwithstanding the works and lines were very defective, the circuit large, the soldiers few; yet, if a general storm could be once repelled, the enemy would be discouraged from attempting a second time, and the season of the year might incommode the besiegers.—On which account they determined upon the best general defence to be made upon the whole, wherein all might share alike.

“ A general defence being fixed on, the colonels were all ordered to the several posts and forts upon the line; and his highness being solicitous for

securing the place, the enemy on the 22d of August, appeared on Pill-Hill, on the south side of the town; he sent a party of horse, commanded by Sir Richard Crome (who in that action received his death's wound) to encounter them: a little before that, Bedminster was fired, on intelligence that the enemy that night intended to quarter 2,000 men in it, and notwithstanding the fire, they drew thither, and plied their small shot all night.—August 23d. The prince caused a traverse or blind of earth to be made within the draw-bridge at Temple-gate, and a battery raised in the Marsh, for securing the river, and the fields beyond it. The enemy began some breast-works, and a battery on the hill without Temple-gate, with a traverse across the way to hinder our sallies.

“ Instructions for delivering the city up to the parliament, signed Thomas Fairfax, and Oliver Cromwell, were privately sent to the citizens, August 25, 1645. Upon the intercepting these papers, his highness caused seven active and suspected persons to be restrained, which prevented the design, and by his personal presence, prevented the great fort from surprizal; and in the mean time, to interrupt the enemy's working, made several sallies, which all succeeded according to the design. August 26, soon after the storm being expected by the enemy's drawing together great bodies of horse and foot, his highness double-manned the line, but nothing followed.—August 28. Five parliament ships entered King-road, and forced Captain Browne, who commanded the Tenth Whelpe, to run up the Severn for security.—August 29. The enemy was making a bridge over the Avon, to conjoin their quarters.—September 3. His highness began a work or cutting off within the line by Lawford's-gate, when Sir Thomas Fairfax sent a summons to surrender.

“ The castle and great fort indeed might have held out for some time, but no assistance from the west, nor from the king, was to be relied on; and the enemy could have blocked up the castle, and advanced 12,000 men to have fought a battle if required, or else have secured themselves with the lines

against all opposition. Besides, it appeared they were so absolutely masters of all the passes, and had so barricaded up the ways, that a small force might have hindered now a great army. And at that time General Pointz so closely observed his majesty's motions, that relief was very improbably to be expected, and Colonel Massey was on the watch to intercept Lord Goring; and as the line was forced, Prior's-Hill fort, an important place, lost, the officer to whose trust it was committed, deserting it, (who never since that time appeared, and who was said to have been killed,) the city on resistance must have been exposed to the spoil and ruin of the enemy; so many gallant men, who had so long and faithfully served his majesty (whose safeties his highness conceived himself in honour obliged to preserve as dearly as his own) had been left to the slaughter and rage of a prevailing enemy; and the Scots being, on the 8th of September, at Gloucester, an intermediate place near which his majesty must have marched to the relief of Bristol, cut off all hopes of succour from him."

At a council of war, held before the king at Newark, on the 18th and 21st of October, Prince Rupert produced this narrative of facts in his own justification; and on a full hearing, his majesty was pleased to declare that "his nephew was not guilty of the least want of courage or fidelity to him;" and the royal decision was confirmed by the unanimous opinion of the council.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

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CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

DURING the memorable year 1645, the inhabitants of Bristol suffered the combined evils of war and pestilence, it being computed that 3,000 persons died in this city of the plague, exclusive of those that perished by the sword. Soon after the surrender of the city to Fairfax, all the clergy here who were suspected of disaffection to parliament, were deprived of their livings, and others appointed in their stead. Hence party rancour prevailed over that cordial unanimity for which the peaceful and industrious citizens of Bristol had been distinguished; the concussions of civil warfare interrupted manufactures; foreign and domestic traffick suffered a temporary suspension, and anarchy threatened the dissolution of the body politic

In the year 1646, a fire broke out in the house of an apothecary on the bridge, and burnt all the houses on both sides, to the number of twenty-four, from the chapel to St. Nicholas's Gate. The licentiousness of the soldiers who composed the garrison of this city, under General Skippon, was intolerable to the inhabitants; and it is recorded that in 1647 a party of the soldiery seized one of the aldermen, and refused to release him till they received a month's pay, and indemnity for the outrage. Indeed the country was, in a great

degree, under martial law for some time prior to the trial and decapitation of Charles I. and after that event the constitution was subverted by a military usurper.—Royalty was abolished by proclamation in 1648, and the mayor of Bristol proclaimed the successors of Charles I. traitors to the state.

In 1649 the citizens of Bristol were, by an act of parliament, obliged to pay £168. 19. 3 $\frac{3}{4}$. monthly, towards the maintenance of the army: the commissioners were the mayor for the time being, five aldermen, and nine of the principal inhabitants. On the 7th of July this year, Lieutenant-General Oliver Cromwell came to this city, and sailed for Ireland, of which he was appointed chief governor by the parliament.

When the Prince of Wales, who was at the Hague, received the melancholy news of his father's death, he assumed the title of king, and appointed his confidential adherents to be his privy counsellors. He embarked from Holland in June, 1650, and landed in Scotland, where he was acknowledged by the principal nobility as their lawful sovereign, and an army raised in support of his pretensions. When the parliament received intelligence of this circumstance, Oliver Cromwell, who had been victorious against the Irish, was recalled. On his arrival in London, he received the thanks of parliament for his public services in Ireland; and on the resignation of General Fairfax, he was appointed commander in chief of the army, and sent with 19,000 veterans to Scotland, against the king. On the 3d of September, 1650, Cromwell defeated the Scottish army at Dunbar, and immediately marched to Edinburgh, which opened its gates, but the castle did not surrender till after a close siege of three months.

King Charles II. arrived at Scone on the 1st of January, 1651, and at the head of an army of 15,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry, he marched to Torward, between Edinburgh and Sterling, where he formed an entrenched camp. Cromwell with his usual promptitude, marched to attack the royal forces, but found

them so strongly posted, that he was unable to force their entrenchments; he therefore conveyed his army by sea into the county of Fife, in order to cut off the King's supplies; and Charles, availing himself of the opportunity, marched into England, where he was joined by a few friends. After a fatiguing march, the King at the head of his army arrived at Worcester, on the 22d of August. He was received with the utmost respect by the magistrates, and solemnly proclaimed in that city; and this favourable reception induced him to stop for a few days, that his troops might rest, after which he purposed to march to London.

In the mean time Cromwell pursued the King, with an army superior to that of his Majesty, both in number and discipline. On the 3d of September, the two armies came to a general action, in the vicinity of Worcester; where, after a contest of some hours, in which the King signalized his courage, he was defeated and compelled to enter the city, whither the royalists were pursued by the enemy, and the principal part of the infantry either slain or taken prisoners. The King himself escaped in the disguise of a rustic, to Boscobel, on the borders of Staffordshire; where he concealed himself in an oak tree, in the thickest part of a wood, during a strict search of his enemies, and travelled only in the night, accompanied by his faithful guide, Richard Pendrell. In his progress towards Bristol, he was pursued by a party of the enemy to the new ferry over the Severn. "He rode through Shire Newton, and crossed the Severn at Chiswell Pitt, on the Gloucestershire side. The boat had scarcely returned, before a corps of about sixty republicans followed him to the Black Rock, and instantly compelled the boatmen, with drawn swords, to ferry them across. The boatmen, who were loyalists, left them on a reef called English Stones, which is separated from the Gloucester side by a lake fordable at low water; but the tide, which had just turned, flowed in with great rapidity, and they were all drowned in attempting to cross. Cromwell, informed of this unfortunate event, abolished the ferry; and it was not renewed until the year

1748. The renewal occasioned a law-suit between the family of St. Pierre and the Duke of Beaufort's guardians. In the course of the suit, depositions taken before a commission of Chancery held at Bristol, went evidently to prove the undoubted right of Mr. Lewis to the ferry, and to confirm the above interesting anecdote."*

The king had been conducted by Richard Pendrell to Mr. Lane's, in Staffordshire, where he was concealed nearly a week, and afterwards, according to a concerted plan, he rode disguised like a servant before Mrs. Lane, who called him William, to the seat of Mr. Norton, at Abbot's Leigh, near Bristol. Lord Clarendon, who has given an authentic and circumstantial account of his majesty's escape, says, "There was no resting in any place till they came to Mr. Norton's; nor any thing extraordinary happened in the way, save that they met many people every day in the way, who were well known to the king; and the day that they went to Mr. Norton's, they were necessitated to ride quite through the city of Bristol, a place and people the king had been so well acquainted with, that he could not but send his eyes abroad, to view the great alterations that had been made there; and when he rode near the place where the great fort had stood, he could not forbear putting his horse out of the way, and rode with his mistress behind him around it."†

From Abbot's Leigh, the king went to Col. Francis Windham's, at Trent, not far from Sherborn, intending to take shipping for France at Lynne. But being disappointed, he rode in disguise before a young gentleman from Trent to Salisbury Plain, where he was met by Doctor Henchman, who conducted him to Heal, and thence to Stonehenge, where Lady Wilmot, a faithful friend, met and conducted him to Sussex, where he embarked in a small vessel at Bright-helmstone, and sailed for Normandy, where he was safely landed in the month

* Fosbrooke's History of Gloucestershire, Vol. I. p. 57.

† Lord Clarendon's History, Vol. III. p. 419.

of November. When this royal exile arrived at Paris, he was neglected by the court of France, and obliged to depend upon his mother's pension for a maintenance. Such was the deplorable state of indigence to which the lawful sovereign of this great nation was reduced by adversity.

In 1651, the Lord Deputy Ireton, son-in-law to Oliver Cromwell, died in Ireland. The vessel in which his body was conveyed to England came into King-road, notice of which being sent to the Mayor of Bristol, he sent a boat covered with black, in which the corpse was brought to this city. When it was landed, a velvet pall was put over the coffin, and the mayor, aldermen, and common-council, in their formalities, and the governor and his officers, with a multitude of the citizens, attended the body. On this occasion the great guns were fired from the castle and fort. These pompous ceremonies in honour of the dead, was a striking contrast to the obscurity with which Charles II. was obliged to pass through this city.

Soon after the exaltation of Oliver Cromwell to the sovereign power, under the title of Lord Protector, he issued orders for the demolition of the castle of Bristol, which was begun on the 3d of January, 1655; and in the course of the following year, a new road was made into the county of Gloucester, through the place on which the fortress formerly stood. A gate was erected in 1659, called Castle-Gate, which was taken down in 1766. Cromwell, who was convinced of the general adherence of the inhabitants of Bristol to royalty, probably thought it expedient to deprive them of the protection of a fortress.

During the protectorate of Cromwell, the Quakers suffered a severe persecution. Preachers of that sect first came to Bristol in the year 1653; and on the 13th of November, 1656, James Nailor, and Dorcas Erbury, were summoned to appear before the parliament in London. James Nailor was sentenced by the

parliament to a severe punishment, which was executed in Bristol on the 17th of January, 1757, according to the following order,

“ Cause James Nailor to ride in at Lawford's-gate upon a horse bare ridged, with his face backward; from thence along Wine-street to the Tolzey; thence down High-street over the bridge, and out of Rackly-gate; there let him alight, and bring him into Saint Thomas-street, and cause him to be stript and made fast to the cart-horse; and there in the market first whipped; from thence to the foot of the bridge, there whipt; thence to the end of the bridge, there whipt; thence to the middle of High-street, there whipt; thence to the Tolzey, there whipt; thence to the middle of Broad-street, there whipt, and then turn into Tailor's-hall, thence release him from the cart-horse, and let him put on his cloaths, and carry him from thence to Newgate by Tower-lane the back way.

“ There did ride before him, bare-headed, Michael Stamper, singing most part of the way, and several other friends, men and women; the men went bare-headed by him, and Robert Rich, (late merchant of London) rode by him bare-headed, and singing, till he came to Redcliff-gate, and there the magistrates sent their officers and brought him back on horseback to the Tolzey, all which way he rode singing very loud, where the magistrates met. It seems James Nailor is not noticed in the sufferings of the Quakers, being justly censured by the generality of them, till he had passed the bitter pangs of a sincere repentance. Howbeit it was very observable, that he endured his extreme punishment with a patience and magnanimity astonishing to the beholders; and many were of opinion, that had not the blindness of their zeal who condemned him, been at least equal to the blackness of his guilt, a punishment much more moderate might have sufficed.” This rigorous punishment was inflicted according to the sentence of a bigotted parliament, and not by the desire of Cromwell, who was naturally brave, and no persecutor.

On the 8th of December, 1657, the following letter from the Lord Protector was received by the Mayor of Bristol.

“ OLIVER, P.

“ Trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well: remembering well the late expressions of love that I have had from you, I cannot omit any opportunity to express my care of you. I do hear on all hands, that the cavalier party are designing to put us into blood. We are, I hope, taking the best care we can, by the blessing of God, to obviate this danger; but our intelligence on all hands being that they have a design upon your city, we could not but warn you thereof, and give you authority, as we do hereby, to put yourselves into the best posture you can, for your own defence, by raising your militia by virtue of the commission formerly sent you, and putting them in a readiness for the purpose aforesaid; letting you also know, that for your better encouragement herein, you shall have a troop of horse sent you to quarter in or near your town. We desire you to let us hear, from time to time, what occurs, touching the malignant party, and so bid you farewell. Given at Whitehall, the 2d December, 1657.

“ To our trusty and well-beloved the mayor, aldermen, and common-council of the city of Bristol.”

From the tenor of this letter, it is evident that the usurper was apprehensive of the friends of royalty, although King Charles, almost destitute of resources, then lived in obscurity in a foreign country. But perhaps this precaution was dictated by the prudence or suspicion of the Protector, whose apparent zeal for the protection of the citizens, by sending “ a troop of horse to quarter in or near the town,” seems to indicate his doubt of their attachment. According to his command, the militia of the city was raised, which probably contributed to the tranquillity of the place

The following instance of that temporising disposition common among mankind, is extracted from *Mercurius Politicus*, a newspaper published during the interregnum. It is dated the 3d of July, 1658, and is descriptive of the pompous reception of Richard Cromwell, eldest son to the Protector.

“ On Thursday last the most illustrious lord, the Lord Richard Cromwell, (having received two or three invitations in the name of this city) set forward from Bath hither, attended by a numerous train of gentry, and was met three miles from the town by the sheriffs, accompanied with at least two hundred horse, whence after their salutation and compliment in the name of the city, they conducted his lordship, with his lady, and the Hon. Col. William Cromwell, Mr. Dunche, &c. into Bristol, waited on by near four hundred horse, at whose entry the artillery was fired from the Marsh, and the ships that lay in the road; and his lordship, riding forward, was encountered by the mayor and aldermen, and was by them waited on to a house provided for his lordship, at Colonel Aldworth's, in Broad-street, and there received with hearty demonstrations of their affection to their highnesses, (whom they said they had formerly the honour to see there) and particularly to his lordship. The next day his lordship rode out to be witness to the beauty of the place, and was at his return entertained with a noble dinner, at which it is observable that (although there were plenty of wine, &c.) yet there was so much respect paid to their prudent orders and civil decorum, that that great entertainment was void of that rudeness, and excess, and noyse, into which the liberty of feasts, in these our days, doe often betray their guests.

“ The same evening his lordship passing thro' another part of the city, round the Town Marsh, was complimented with the discharge of the great guns upon the place, and in his way forth treated particularly by the mayor with a banquet, &c. and returned safe to Bath. Throughout this whole entertainment, there appeared as clear a fare of duty and good affection, as ever was seen at

any time upon the like occasion: yet it is no more than what is paid to that noble lord in every place, by such as have had the honour to observe his great humanity, joyned with so great hopes, and the noblest inclinations of a virtuous mind."

But the short, though triumphant irruption of Oliver Cromwell, was drawing near to a termination. In the month of August, 1658, he was seized with a fever at Hampton-Court, and his distemper daily increasing, he was brought to Whitehall, where, after having nominated his son Richard for his successor, he expired on the 3d of September, in the fifty-eighth year of his age.

On the day after the demise of Oliver Cromwell, his son Richard was proclaimed at London, Protector of the Common Wealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland; and a similar proclamation was made without opposition in the principal towns of the three kingdoms. The following is an account of the procession, ceremonies, and rejoicings in Bristol, on that occasion.

"The certain tydings of the decease of his late highness Oliver Lord Protector, and the news of proclaiming his now highness the Lord Richard, came to our city this day by the post, with an order from the council, for the proclaiming of him here likewise with all speed, which order being communicated by the mayor to the common-council, direction was presently given for putting all things in the best readiness could be, for such a solemnity, which indeed was performed the best that ever was in this place, upon such an occasion. The order whereof was thus: the place of meeting was the Guildhall; the several livery companies in their gowns, and with their banners, went first; after them the drums of the city regiment, and the serjeants with all their halberts, and then the militia officers; after them the several civil officers belonging to the corporation, with the city musicians playing; and then followed the mayor and common-council in scarlet. Being come to the Cross and near

about it, the trumpets sounding, the drums beating, and the music playing, the sheriffs in their scarlet went up into the Cross, and there one of them read the proclamation, according to order; which being ended, there was a very great acclamation of the people, with sounding of trumpets, &c. The whole companies aforesaid brought the mayor to his house, and then returned to their several homes. All this was seconded with the firing of many great guns in the Marsh, ringing of bells, bonfires, and discharging of the great guns in the ships; the concourse of people attending this service was very great, considering the shortness of time for their appearance; and indeed all was carried on and done in the best manner, and with the highest affection that could possibly be."

But although the Protector Richard received addresses from boroughs, cities, and counties, to the number of ninety, and had similar compliments paid him by all the regiments without exception, he soon felt his inability to rule the factions then prevalent in England. In 1659, the officers of the army appointed Fleetwood, son-in-law to the late protector, commander in chief, and compelled Richard to dissolve the parliament. Soon afterwards the protector resigned his authority, and the government was in a state of anarchy. In January, 1660, General Monck, at the head of the Scotch army, entered England, and marched without opposition to London. On the 5th of February he went to parliament, and received the compliments and thanks of the speaker, in behalf of the house.

At this period, the city of Bristol was exposed to the danger of an insurrection. The mayor had forbidden the inhuman practice of throwing at cocks on Shrove-Tuesday; but the apprentices, exasperated at being deprived of this annual amusement, "did rise in a riotous and tumultuous manner, and assembled in the Marsh. To obey the mayor's orders, they squailed at geese, and tossed bitches and cats before his door; and the sheriff had his head broke for endeavouring to drive them away."

The following is a circumstantial account of this insurrection, which appears to have originated in political rancour.

“ Bristol, February 6th, 1660.

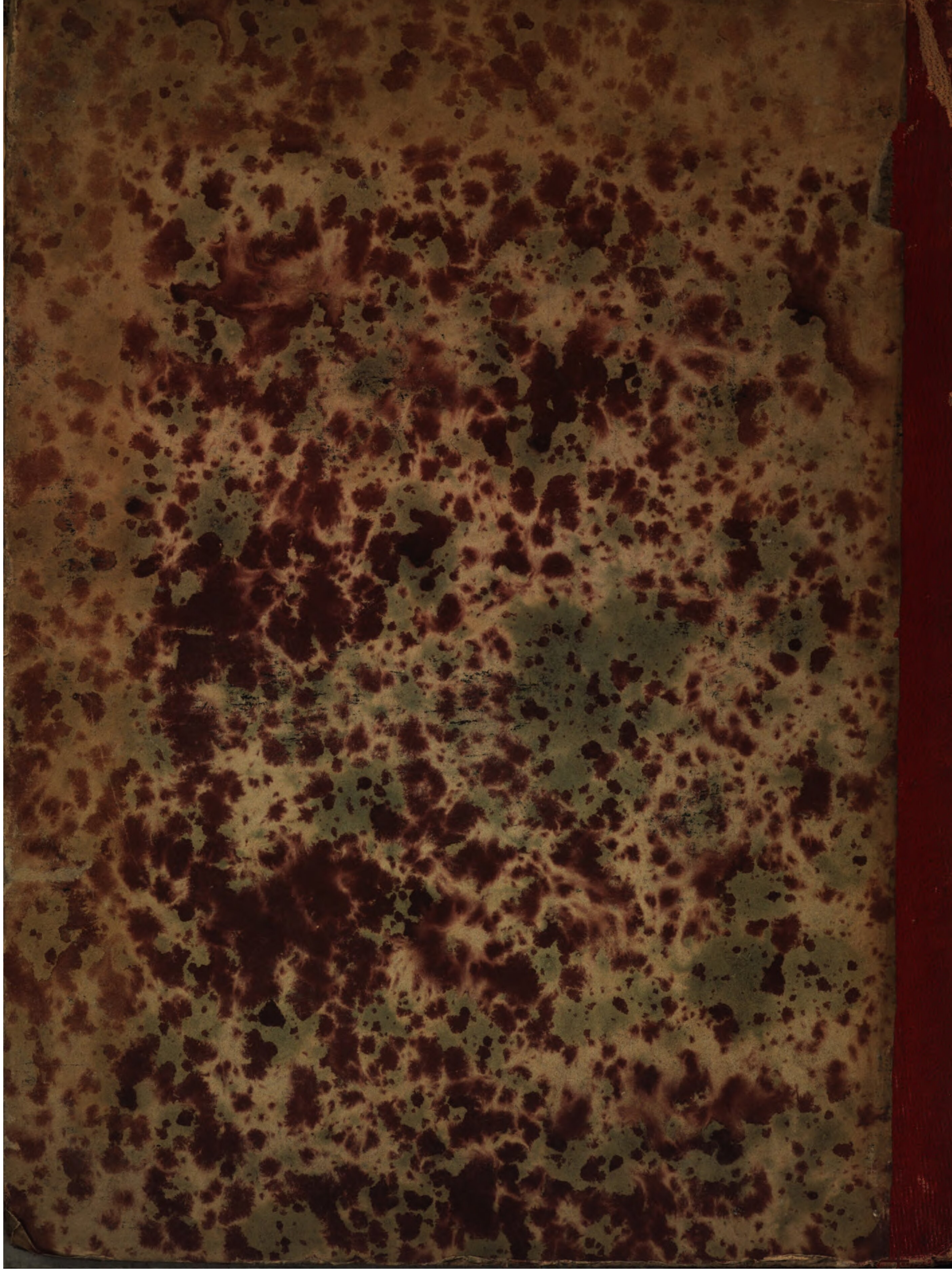
“ Here hath been a great disorder in this city, where two troops of horse being designed to come, could not gain admittance. Those masters of families, who underhand hatched and fomented the tumult, were so wary as not to appear themselves, but set on their apprentices, who with the meaner sort, ran up and down the streets, crying out, “ A free Parliament !” In this confusion they shewed who they were for, by falling foul upon such as have stood in all times most firmly to the interest of parliament and common wealth, many of whose houses they forced open, and took away all the arms from them that they could find, and from some more than their arms. By this means the rabble being up, the magistrates were at a stand, and knew not well what to do a good while ; but at last they in prudence so ordered the matter, that hearing how the common cry went, they had conference with some of the leaders, and to pacify them, told them, that if they would have their desire, this was not the way to get it; and that if they would proceed orderly, and join with them in an address to parliament, they might be successful. The multitude hearing this, began to cool, and at length dismissing their guards which they had set in several parts, they retired to their several houses. Presently upon their pacification, the magistrates took the opportunity to disperse, and settle their militia in such a manner, that all is quiet, and we doubt not they will prevent the like disturbances for the future.

“ February 10th. This day se’nnight the apprentices and others broke out into an insurrection, and secured the main-guard before any company could be raised to suppress them, and continued increasing daily in great numbers, notwithstanding all endeavours used to suppress them, declaring for a free parliament, and some for Charles Stuart; and they gave out that they should be backed

with numbers of men from the adjacent counties, setting a guard upon the mayor in his own house. They did beat up drums round about the city, and made great brags what they would do, being the more confident, because several of the gentry came into them out of the country. Nevertheless, when Major Izod's first party appeared near the city, (which was about two miles before his body) the apprentices began to divide, and promised the magistrates they would lay down their arms, and return home to their masters; but afterwards failed in the performance thereof, through the persuasion of their abettors. But at length they began to alter again, hearing that Major Izod was at hand, and resolved to make his way into town. So their ringleaders deserted them, and the multitude returned to their own homes, some hours before the coming in of the said major, who yesterday in the evening had free entrance with four troops of horse. Captain Vicarage, with a company of the trained bands, entertained him at the gate, and Captain Kelly, with another company of the trained bands, kept the ground last night. This day the mayor made proclamation that all men should bring in their arms that were in the late insurrection. We are now all in peace and quiet, and are upon enquiry after the abettors and promoters of this disturbance, the heads whereof are fled.—Feb. 18th. This city is quiet again; six hundred of Colonel Twisleton's regiment are come hither. Nevertheless, when last Thursday night, news came from London of a free parliament, the multitude shewed themselves so far only, as to make bonfires and ring bells through the city; but in half an hour's space the bonfires were extinct, and the bells made to cease. But the same humour runs in most towns hereabout."

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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Corry, John

The history of Bristol, civil and ecclesiastical

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Bristol (1816)

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